



THE NEXT RUNG

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Paper Boats. (Sketches of Indian Village Life.)

On the Sand-Dune. (Musings on Life in Free Verse.)

Murugan, The Tiller. (A Novel of Indian Life.)

THE NEXT RUNG

BY

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TO
HIS HOLINESS
JAGADGURU
SRI CHANDRASEKHARENDRA SARASVATI
SANKARACHARYA SWAMIGAL
OF
SRI KAMAKOTI PITHA
WHO BELONGS TO A HIGHER ORDER OF MEN WHO SERVE AS
GUIDING LIGHTS TO OUR BOTTOM RUNG CIVILISATION

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CONTENTS

PART I

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

CHAP.	PAGE
I. Our First Triumphs	1
II. On Government	6
III. On Property	14
IV. The Arch of Religion	20
V. War and Peace	26
VI. The Goal of Science	32
VII. On Cooking and Clothing	39
VIII. Agriculture and Emigration	45
IX. On Education	53
X. The Hurdles Ahead	60
XI. The Next Rung	69
XII. In My Republic	76

PART II

THE URGE OF RENASCENT INDIA

I. India's Place and Work	89
II. What is Wrong with India Now	95
III. Federal or Unitary	101

CHAP.	PAGE
IV. Indian States and British India . . .	108
V. The Indian Village	113
VI. Some Problems of Swaraj India . . .	127
VII. The Promised Land	136
VIII. Swaraj Constitution for India . . .	140
Appendix : Table of Area, Population and Revenue of the Chief Countries in the World	152

PART I

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

CHAPTER I

OUR FIRST TRIUMPHS

WE have celebrated our emergence from the jungle with the twin arts of cooking and clothing. This decorative impulse speeds the glory of our civilization, and embroiders every refinement. The vanity of this great victory still persistently guides and misguides every one of our major activities. For, our triumphs are not yet wholly our own. They have not yet become part of our being, autonomous and self-functioning, like respiration or circulation of the blood. They are partial strangers to the flesh. We have still to assimilate these precious gains so intimately as not to feel or strive for them at all. Then only the conquest will be complete. The gift will become our own for ever. But we seem now to be oblivious of this higher urge.

Time is fleeting, adding remorselessly to the age of Life. But we still continue to stage with complacence the same old play, half pain and cruelty, half melodrama, grinning and clapping hands at the appointed place, at the same old wit and gallantry. There is some little improvement here and there in the drapery and the dash of paint

and powder. But the substance is the same. There is no intrinsic progress. There is no evolution in the quality. There is no breeding of better types. Drearily the same pattern is repeated. We seem no better than plangent frogs in the pond. We do not realise that there are more lovely peaks and flats at higher levels, now screened from our limited vision by the white radiance of the snow. Our civilization is but the bottom rung of another ladder running up to a loftier range, more peaceful, more panoramic and more sublime. Who will not be inspired to seek it at any cost, who has caught a glimpse of the radiant vision ?

But the first triumphs of our emergence are very hopeful and significant. Cooking and clothing are intimate with a higher destiny for man. They carry the seeds of the future. They are the symbols of a new gift, the dawn of a new kind of power ; an intelligence and a mind to control and direct the great cosmic forces. Life is perhaps from the amoeba to the man, both in chaos and in order, a purposeless play in infinity. But finitely considered at any moment of time, there are rules for the game, and runs for the goal. There is a discipline, a beautiful sense of proportion, a graded symmetry from start to finish, that gives ordered strength, form and life to the essentially unsettling but renewing quality of action.

We are probably the youngest of the newcomers on this planet. Our history is too short an hour

in the long biological day, to judge precisely the growth, place and future of our species. But even the short hour has been so well crowded with strenuous action as to leave behind vast store of materials to gather wherefrom the rise of the graph of our race. Our complex modern civilization is one of the quickest growths. It is a dramatic story of man's magic command over Nature, gained in the short space of a century.

This victory over Nature is largely the splendid work of the strenuous West. It has been a period of intense, objective Renaissance the like of which we have never seen. The impulse is not yet over and the late fruits promise to be even more luscious. These achievements of Science have necessitated the complex industrial civilization which needs for its nourishment, the sun-like down-pour of the silent work and energy of the millions. It is strenuous. It knows no fatigue. But the happiness it brings in its train is only to a few and the pain is to the many, just those, alas, who sweat to work out its wonders! But its final message of good is for all, when these intermediate stages of experiment shall soon be over. For, this control over Nature is not an end in itself. It is but an intricate, if ugly, scaffolding for a beautiful structure to be raised, whose foundations are yet in the first stages of a slow making.

Our bottom rung civilization is reared on a tripod of three institutions. Primarily to safeguard the

first triumphs of our emergence, we have gradually built up with infinite patience and labour, the three salient institutions of Government, Property, and Marriage. They now regulate our daily life almost at every point, if not with beauty, harmony and peace, at least with great vigour and efficiency. They are simple and massive in appearance. But the inner mechanism is most delicate and complicated.

These three seemingly diverse institutions are vitally linked to one another in several ways. Man retains his nature and quality, a blend of the beast and the angel, not yet well-harmonised even for a blend, mainly through keeping up the purity, efficiency and intricate working of these three valuable institutions under every stress of circumstance. This has saved him in the long, laborious, and uneven struggle of years through jungle and city, from slipping down, but has also equally prevented him from going up.

We have achieved so far marvellous progress in externals—a good and necessary preliminary. But we have not changed very much fundamentally. For, ascension to a higher species or being is the most difficult thing in nature. By refining our institutions alone, our qualities will not improve. By refining our qualities alone, our institutions will not improve. Both the processes should go together. There should be a subtle and simultaneous interaction between mind and matter to make

for progress. Man, individually and collectively has always shown remarkable facility in achieving either separately, but rarely both at the same time. So the effort has been so far without lasting benefit to the race. For, the secret of simultaneous and co-operative action in both the spheres is not yet fully vouchsafed to him. But he seems to be moving on quickly to it, in these renascent and wonderful times.

Intrinsic progress resulting in a higher being is a harmonious leap. It came to the anthropoid in a divine moment of originality and courage, probably born of exclusive eating of nuts and fruits, and the rich meditation on the leafy branches in the vernal gloom of the jungle. It excelled itself, but, alas, by a process of ruin to its own species, in the very moment of triumph. A higher kind of destiny awaits man is our sincere biological hope. But that destiny will never be realised fully, without proper guidance and knowledge.

Let us seek the Future and the grand Truths of life with a passionless and architectonic mind, and evaluate how far the present institutions work properly towards that goal. Let us strive and do our best, before the wicket is drawn by the ultimate extinction of the Solar System or it is scattered by the catastrophic bowling of some deadly star or comet.

CHAPTER II

ON GOVERNMENT

GOVERNMENT has a respectable pedigree. It is the youngest of a family of three. So it is the most intrepid. It owes nominal allegiance to the elder two, but really controls both on critical occasions. It is the trine expression of a unity in its most powerful aspect. The family likeness from top to toe is best revealed in it. Its qualities are well reflected even in its smallest activities. So let us study it first.

Cooking is the beginning of Marriage. Marriage is the beginning of Property. Property is the beginning of Government.

"I shall hunt the game and you shall cook it for me," the first thinker said, in a lucid and business-like moment, to his first lady-love. This simple dialogue, oriented by the new born sense of possession, has founded the greatest and most sacred of our institutions, now clothed with all the finer attributes of our own splendid emergence.

Cooking and Marriage need for their sustenance Property, and Property needs the protection of Government. So Government and Property are

very intimate allies. The one exists for the other. It is a twin expression of a new single instinct which man gained one fine morning, the instinct to possess for ever. One feeds the other subtly and clearly, and a vitalising current of mutual help keeps alive all the three institutions unimpaired.

But the load which the maintenance of these institutions means for the human energy is terrible, and absorbs every volt of it in the strenuous task of keeping them going without a permanent breakdown. It has charged our civilisation with overwork and slavery, fret and worry and uneven functioning, leading to chronic fissures in our social life. Government instead of humanising has brutalised the normal run of even refined life, and has given it altogether a new purpose far removed from the original intention.

Government gives the greatest scope for the exercise of the still unshed inheritance of the jungle, the promptings of the lowly origins of man still physiologically reproduced in him and so capable of psychological expression in life in suitable atmosphere. The institution of marriage generally considered gives the least scope for such cruel display. Property is a cross-breed of the two, nourishing gratefully its twin parents. It gives scope, like a true cross-breed, for the dual promptings, the bestial and the celestial, fierce self-interest which will not stop at a world-war for the sake of personal

ambition or gain as well as wonderful altruistic generosity. It promotes the exercise of both the qualities as the atmosphere lends itself. It may be a million dollar gift to a library or a hospital, or to the latest invention in the machinery of destruction in war; to the League of Nations or to a War Loan.

The ultimate and original aim of Government is noble and beneficent. It is intended to ameliorate by justice and mercy, the evils wrought by a high sense of possession which has marked man as a refined eating animal, and forced him to develop the institution of property. The birds in the air and the beasts in the jungle have also their sense of possession but strong only for the current needs of the day. But man thinks of the morrow, of his sons and grandsons, doubles his acquisitive greed, fences and fights for it friend and foe alike, that he may assure himself a long future of ease and comfort.

Government is the palpable force which gives setting and direction to every one of our activities in modern days. It came into being primarily to preserve property, incidentally life—dead life needs no food, living life does require it imperatively every day. Its first requisite is ample police power theoretically to protect the weak and the poor in such ownership against the strong, the rich and the aggressive. But in practice it protects and strengthens the rich in such a way as to keep down the

poor. So instead of equalising the food sources of production and thus eliminating the age-long conflict that rages round the food problem in all stages of life, for which ideal work Government has come into being, it has only stabilised and encouraged the inequalities and injustices.

The chief sanction of Government to enforce this great ideal of economic equality till it becomes inviolably part of a citizen's being is the progressive and mild application of organised force, as the need requires, till it ultimately engages a whole nation at war. The eventual justification for this use of violence which the organisation of Government is itself a pledge in its conception to avoid, is the supposed righteous combination of the many weak, for the protection of an ideal, against a few strong and lawless. But in reality it works out in favour of a few strong, utilising the many weak against their own interests, the whole transaction being camouflaged with a prudent mixture of idealism and rank selfishness. Why?

The impulse that originates this grand co-operative moment of Government working in favour of peace all round to enable quietly every one to enjoy the fruits of his own labour, comes from a higher urge in evolution. But the evil faery that rocked the cradle of man's birth has given him the loftiest intentions which change to the meanest acts in their rendering. Many impulses in man as such are very good at their

birth. But in translation, in the act of expression, still functioning through unreformed organs of lowly origin, yet inadequate to the higher spirit which they are asked to render into deed by a new-born, surging idealism, they turn injurious and self-destructive. Because of this perversion in deed of a soaring and upward impulse, our real progress has been substantially impeded.

Government is a sanitary need like excreting or scavenging, where men have collected together into an organised society functioning even if it be little higher than primitively. It is a deed for which Nature means and offers no reward, except health, and man has no right to expect money for such services. But this ideal of singular majesty has never been kept in mind. And in a highly commercialised age like ours where even sand is sought to be twisted into a rope of gold, Government is made a source of income to a privileged few. This is the subtle poison at the source which has vitiated the many pure streams of our activities. It is in essence honorary service that constitutes the integrity and purity of Government and its utility in aiding man to evolve himself into a better being. This has been clean ignored in all governments.

Instead of this true picture, what do we see all around? Government service is now an object of industrialised exploitation, and a vested interest like coal-mines or of profitable money-making like

a cotton mill or a jute factory. The rich go there to make themselves richer, and the very object of Government to equalise food sources and eliminate the age-long struggle is not only defeated, but a reverse process of the most bitter and corrupt hunt for salaried offices or honorary offices with enormous secret perquisites, is going on. Once in power, the rich go on pouring continually sand instead of oil into the bearings of the machinery of government frustrating its purpose of economic equality and peace everywhere and to everyone.

Instead of a stern duty, from which the poor who are more fit to do it are kept away both by direct and indirect ways, Government is now a profitable adventure. The more reckless and vain the adventurer is, the more belauded and salaried he finds himself for his brag and invective. No wonder, then, that the human breed has considerably deteriorated in all tracts where Government is a sickening, full-time, vulgar trade palsying all the higher ideals and aspirations. A civilisation which has become wholly political is nearing its own end. A country which hearkens only to the nimble voice of the politician will be rich only in piracy and trade, and totally poor in God's goods, culture and religion. It is a sign of exhaustion.

Within a hundred years, the burden of over-government has become a top-heavy burden. It is no idle statement, for, you will in a decade hear the crash of all governments in the world under the

sheer weight of the over-load, if they persist in their mad and perverted career, fouling the purest fountains of life and inverting their very purpose and ideals.

Let the revenue figures tell their own ruinous tale. The total revenue which Government raises in the whole world is an enormous sum running to several million pounds very year. It staggers all thinking men why so much of innocent labour should be shed in vain. And ninety per cent of the labour which it represents is futile labour from evolution's view-point, and nourishes really none of the other two institutions vitally concerning our welfare. It comprises civil and military work on a colossal scale and mostly a waste. It is labour at the desk, supervision, paper, ink, file, and red-tape. Probably about ten per cent of it is more or less connected with agriculture and other true needs and pursuits.

Government absorbs the best talents, the cream of the race, and turns them on to empty work. Every man sweats from three to four months in the year for the privilege of being governed. In agricultural countries, it may be a little less and in industrial and commercial, a little more, varying from twenty-five to thirty-three per cent. What is the return to the average peace-loving, hard working tiller of the soil, the primary producer of wealth? Very little except a vague immersion in ideas of peace and protection.

If our civilisation is ever fated to step on to the next rung of the ladder, this over-Government should cease from to-morrow with its infinite cost to the poor, humble and contented citizens, and a great gain to the idle, ambitious, and exploiting parasites.

The anguished cry everywhere is that the whole world is being over-ruled. The politician is gripping all the threads of our life in his own damp, perspiring hands. The message of redress is in the air. Decentralise and govern as little as possible, till government reaches the vanishing point with the evolution of man. Politics is warfare in peacetime. It is the flag that flutters idly over trampled life. It is the symbol of spiritual ruin.

The sense of gain and possession which now motives all labour should yield place to a sense of public duty and right conduct based on permanent values to evolving life. This is a straight and urgent call, if this great and costly institution is to help and not hinder as it now does our future. A minimum of Government is the cry of evolving life. In the steep ascent, carry no more this habit-laden, superstitious burden on the back that impedes the foot-fall and mars the straight line of vision.

CHAPTER III

ON PROPERTY

THE beginning of ownership constitutes the dawn of our civilisation. All the higher refinements that will be permanently ours one day, hang round an intelligent and humane reordering of this vital institution. It has given the hunting instinct, deep in all stages of life, the first touches of a regulated game. Winning the daily food is an unrelenting struggle everywhere, both in the city and in the jungle, conditioned by luck and personal daring.

For man it has ceased to be so cruel or blind, though it is still the greatest game of chance, ushering in its exercise the whole range of the bestial. The hunting instinct has not yet been vitally transformed into a peaceful strength and patient courage for steady work. Our civilisation will never realise its higher anticipations and longings, till this lower inheritance is sublimated into a divine passion for economic justice and equality, harmony and peace. It is wrong to quote from studies of animal life to prove the text that man must live dangerously to live well or live at all. To say so, is to forget that man is biologically

a bold and a new step, an experiment in the higher ranges. The lower instinct is being slowly educated and transmuted into a new quality by a higher unseen but persistent urge.

Property is the mother of all problems, for, life from the lowest amoeba is instinct with the joy of motion. Motion means the need to work for the food to nourish oneself. And the only price for this glory of motion which Nature recognises is a recurrent hunger which should be satisfied somehow every day. And for everyone to do it without conflict and struggle, cruelty and violence, the only way is to recognise the right of every one to such a feed. Property has sprung of some such implicit understanding, and a love and instinct for some peaceful settlement of these age-long claims and habits. It must continue till the divine day dawns when man shall be nourished without food raised by labour, by mere solar heat and light.

Economic equality is the divine urge that has laid the foundations of Property and Government, not for their own sake but for a greater end. It is a birth-right. But modern civilisation has compelled ninety out of a hundred to sell it for nothing at the very hour of birth. The stomach is an equal span, an even and beautiful span for all. Hunger is the same for all. Then, why, in the name of God, should not every man possess in his own right an acre of land, a minimum to appease that hunger. But the dispossessed sons of the soil are

as many as ninety out of a hundred, for the ten have annexed by their own violence the acres of the ninety. So an equal distribution of property,—land alone is true property—based on the ideals of economic equality is the great message of this institution which now lies too palsied to do its great work, because of the greed and ambition of our leading men, and because its comrade, guide and protector, Government itself has miserably fallen into a selfish groove from its original purpose.

Property is a very great step for man. It is a signal arrangement in evolution implying a good deal of forbearance, restraint and co-operation. Admirable is the conception and the intelligence that lead to it. Compared with the chaos of the wood from which he has sprung, from the riotous and combative chase for food in the jungle in all grades of disorder and violence, the institution of property is a great achievement, and its ideals contain the true message of hope and peace in one plane of life at least. Though still the object of great crimes, none the less, property holds in itself the musk of universal peace. If only you pause to think for a moment on an empty stomach after a fast and a penance, the precious secret that throws light on the great truths of life is yours. And you see clearly the radiant scheme of God even through the ragged curtain the priests have hung before the Divine Presence.

Government, especially modern Government, has signally failed in its high mission of economic equality, because human nature is still subject to its lower promptings. By the same magic of selfishness, property came to be conceived not as the birth right of each, to which conception it owes its own formation, but as a reward for prowess and work, fleet-footed work. The same low instinct still survives in us powerfully. For, the instinct itself has not yet been educated and changed into its higher form. This differentiation in reward based on the degree of intelligence, courage and work of an individual is itself a bestial inheritance from the lower self. But this does not work so much harm even in the brute kingdom, as the brutes have not invented a currency system, a cold storage, by which a few may annex the food of many and preserve it for themselves idly for ever from father to son. Even such civilised forms of animal life as the bee, the ant and the termite, which are clothed with a low form of refinement and immortality, have not been so far discovered to possess an efficient monetary system regulated by a State Bank. Till man refuses to give up this upward and soaring scale of salaries for clever work quickly done, there is no hope for him of a quick ascension in the divine scale. Let none take more than what he needs in kind for the day. Then only redemption is near, and the future will be worthy of our own noble longings.

All gifts are mixed gifts from the gods. The good emerges very slowly and the evil is weeded out only by untiring work. Eliminate this slow poison theory of different wages, to each according to his merit—the worst phrase man has coined in the Devil's mint; while the stomach is an equal span for all and hunger is the same for all in quantity and quality. This theory has poisoned our beautiful life, distorted angelic births into the vilest satyrs. All standards of living must be one. The lowest and simplest are the best in evolution's eye as having the greatest survival value. This true law has been thoroughly reversed in the competitive basis of life in the West for the last one hundred years, though that too is perhaps serving a limited end. Because man's sway over Nature is itself an inverted power, obtained as an intermediate though disquieting gain before achieving the final happiness of inner control, for which it sweats fatiguing with over-work millions of hands.

The life of equal food and peace for all dreamed of in this sketch was not unknown to all periods of history and all races of the world. Vedic India beautifully chanted this song of economic equality even amidst a great deal of unevenness in other matters, and the true Indian village is an honest civic rendering of this noble song.

Government has a great part to play by atoning for its own wrong, now and quickly, and re-ordering

this institution on the true and beautiful foundations that are still visible a little below the mounds of fresh and wind-swept sands. Government is almost economic in origin, and remains only to fulfil itself economically. Till the ideals and aims of property, economic justice and equality, become part of our own nature, absorbed as an unchanging higher instinct in the human psychology to be reproduced in the miracle of recapitulation of our life history, till the instinct to find and allow our neighbour his god-anointed acre becomes permanent and inevitable in action, till then, both the great institutions of Government and Property should function properly and adequately for the benefit of the race and its uplift.

It is the life-purpose of all institutions, to ingrain into our blood their ideals, and mould them into habits of action till they are absorbed in our very nature, and become part of our being. Our truest possessions are only those which live in us without reliance on any external stimulus for their awakening. Gaining for ever the ideals and objects for which they stand the institutions will then disappear with victory in death.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARCH OF RELIGION

MARRIAGE is the most sensitive and delicate of the three institutions which we have built up of many loving sacrifices. The sense of possession and enjoyment is still the most dominant impulse giving it an exclusive dignity and fenced isolation. But this economic bottom is screened and decorated with a superstructure of exquisite loveliness and devotion into which has been poured continually some of the tenderest and sweetest of human feelings, the affection and surrender of home life. In ultimate purpose evolution has meant it to do the same duty as Property and Government, to bring harmony, peace and love into a world of chaos, fighting and struggle. The ideals of the other two institutions can be made part of our inheritance only by the proper functioning of Marriage.

In the institution of marriage, the bubbling impulse of sex, with its ancient reverie and roving romanticism has been schooled into a colossal virtue of monogamous devotion. More than that

we can not now lay to its credit. The sex-impulse has been controlled but not transmuted. Its energy has been schooled in a way, but not sublimated. Its utility is still directed only to race-perpetuation and not yet to race-rejuvenation. It is being used for consolidation and not yet for the progress of the species. But surely it holds the magic key to the door that lets us into the spiral flights of evolution, and its ever-rising wonderlands.

But the subject is wide, complex and delicate. Its intimacies and truths like the *yogic sadhanas* of the Hindus are best realised only by absorbed meditation and close self-thinking. The science which deals with marriage and race reproduction, the science of Eugenics is still an infant science, and the best in modern thought is being slowly attracted to it only from recent times. Marriage is worth a book by itself as the ripe work of a mature and serene mind in the evening hours of a full and tranquil life.

Government, Property and Marriage, are the three great external embodiments of our work and civilisation. What is the song they sing and its refrain? A noble song it is and a devotional prayer to the Angel of Peace. Their aim taken collectively is to usher in an era of peace and love among men, shedding even the last vestiges of the great conflict that is coeval with the birth of Life itself even in its humblest forms. This collective work splendidly conceived in the most ecstatic moments of idealism

has been but partially carried out amidst the difficulties of its own reaction. We instinctively feel in the midst of this external work, with the rare vision that God has vouchsafed to our greatest, that even this grand organisation is inadequate to do the internal construction and education of the species individually. For, all organisations carry in their bosom the germs of violence which slowly mature into the rebel that eventually destroys the whole some day.

To kill this germ of reaction produced of all institutions, individual education and training in the Higher Path are felt to be more paramount than this huge roping of men, with strands made up of uneven pieces of different quality in fibre and twist. No progress is real which does not harmonise the within and the without. Religion stepped in to do this task of cleansing the individual and making him a fit wheel in the machine. The three institutions constantly require strenuous action, even for their lowest upkeep in working order. This overwork reacts in a longing for an ideal of repose, and the quiet joys of a simple life. Religion promises this: peace, love, contentment, leisure, meditation, and inward search, as against work, waste and hurry, slavery and loss of self-respect incidental to all organised life.

Religion sprang naturally as a reaction of the working of the three institutions, to aid their proper and healthy functioning, by improving the strain

of the individual worker for the collective welfare. A beautiful arch of triumphal welcome, in four colours, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, was erected before the close of the seventh century. Religion achieved its greatest when it worked in utter unison with Government, as in the epochal days of Asoka. But even in friction, it never failed to touch with a fine moral benevolence and grandeur every one of the three institutions. Often its ethical dictates were made the laws of the people governing marriage, property and even government itself.

So the scheme in all its twofold comprehensive-ness was conceived perfectly by the greatest sons of the race. Only everything did not pull together because of our own uneven mind and the fundamental inability of the human race to transmute into deeds its inmost ideals and genuine longings. Religion unfortunately took four colours though born of one pure and splendid white. It is this breaking up of a single universal idea, though necessitated by our conditions of life on this wide-spread earth with poor means of communications ten centuries ago, that has lead to several cracks in the crowning dome we have sought to put on our own great emergence.

It introduced new elements of danger, and supplied fresh fuel for the smouldering embers of a low fire. Even peace and religion moved to the excitement of vigorous propaganda lose their

essentially humane and gentle quality. The four religions vied with one another for supremacy and each claimed the exclusive excellence to become the universal. Some of the most devastating and cruel wars were fought in their names. It correspondingly impaired the vitality of the three institutions, and impeded their work almost fatally. The moment religion gains spiritual but not actual or theological control over the functioning of our institutions, and our politicians in particular, the goal is in sight. If the union becomes perfect between religion and the three great institutions, our life would ascend quickly to a higher plane.

Now, even after three thousand years of work, man's intrinsic nature is just the same. The same mixed impulse of awe and self-interest controls and speeds his action, only with the name and shape of the instruments of action changed, sometimes beyond all recognition. This has been sadly mistaken for progress.

But there is one good sign marking the endeavour at every step. We have not given up the game as fruitless, slowly slipping down or hurrying back. On the other hand, indications are not wanting to show that a renascent wind is slowly rising in the horizon already filling the sails. A new movement of mankind as a whole seems now possible towards one religion and one philosophy of life, inaugurating an era of peace, abolishing war once for all as the

most troublesome and the last of our inheritances from the jungle. Religion and philosophy in communion with the three institutions will hasten the advent of the glorious day.

May God give us soon the higher mind for such a harmonious and transcendent leap for ever, from war and conflict to eternal peace.

CHAPTER V

WAR AND PEACE

HE who talks of war as a biological necessity which keeps at maximum efficiency this idle and effeminate race has studied life only in the jungle, in its lower forms, and has freely applied its conclusions to man. He forgets that man is a new and graceful step in evolution, a splendid experiment in the higher unknown. He forgets the noble urge for peace he himself feels while advocating war in a mistaken sense of necessity as the sad logic of the science of life.

However thin and slender the lad of peace may seem now, he is the heir-apparent to the throne. The future is not to the all-engrossing old combative instinct. The fault is in thinking of life as a mere horizontal continuation meandering into sportive moods for variety, in which Nature delights. Not unweeable is the combative instinct. You can supplant the combative by the pacific instinct. It is a slow work but surely possible. For, instinct itself is the result of evolution, the embedded promptings of long-continued habits of action.

Curiously war itself has made one signal offering at the Shrine of Peace. It has slowly applied itself to the work of burning up the lower, the bestial and the militant elements in society, just to protect those institutions aimed at bringing peace and joy. The war-like races who by nature found quiet life a boredom have perished in their endeavour against Nature's own divine urge.

But modern wars are making matters terribly anxious where the gentle and noble-minded are equally burnt up with the others, and the area of conflagration is becoming unlimited. For it has reached the dimensions of a universal destruction.

The blind mechanical excellence which modern warfare enjoys has given the greatest thinkers moments of deep anxiety. For, with every species, the way to immortality is laid zigzag very near the path to self-destruction, and runs on the edge of a precipice. A faint, irregular line divides the two. Our excellence in science is meant to yield us one day the secret of immortality. But its present perverse application almost wholly to War, blindly destroying the good and the bad, may lead us abruptly to racial suicide. War, instead of being in essence the messenger of peace, has become the angel of death.

War is the ultimate necessity for the protection of the three institutions, especially, of Government whose fundamental aim is peace. It is the weapon of the nation to force the will to peace on the

disturber. So all wars are always waged to end wars. This is the psychology of war and the profound human motive for its popularity and the infinite sacrifices it involves. So the peace treaty that follows the victory is more important than the battles won and the deeds of heroism done. War tragically fails to achieve its noble end and aim of Peace, because the peace treaty drawn up is usually a twisted and angry one actuated by vindictive motives, and selfish and local desires. So the cycle of misery repeats itself, with infinite cruelty to the masses in general and the armies in action in particular.

Again, the institutions for whose protection the blow is struck have themselves fallen from their high estate, and aim really no longer at peace but at the perpetuation of some form of injustice, some vested interest, good and useful to the few in positions of vantage but on the whole destructive of the common good. So wars will disappear by eventually functioning solely for peace if only the proper atmosphere is created. Government and Property should be rightly adjusted and attuned by a re-election and affirmation of the sanctity of this central idea and formative purpose. All these mean some great leader who dares to revalue life from top to bottom.

The splendid democratic movement in the West is an attempt to control the hand of the evil-doer in which it has only partially succeeded. For its

programme is wholly political. It is insidiously subjected to the demands of trade and commerce which in essence deny economic equality to the human race. The democratic form of Government will achieve its mission of peace, and wear the long coveted crown of glory if only it succeeds and purges its trade instincts, and spiritualises its politics. Then political liberty in joyous communion with economic equality in a true Democracy will function both in war and in peace solely for peace.

Man's curse is not so much his ignorance. He knows well the universal good as clearly as he knows his own self-interest. He knows the permanent values which he ignores in action as well as the temporary delights and selfish desires with which he debauches his mind, body and soul. It is therefore not in knowing, but in rendering the ideals into the deed, that there is the fatal and tragic inadequacy in man. The human executive mechanism is still loaded with such impure habits and low traditions and the imprints of deep-laid and coarse instincts that even the loftiest intentions turn to nothing in deed. That is why always the saint is he who follows his own teaching, however puny and perverse. He is the man entitled to reverence. For he shows the way up, the first steps of control and conquest. The great teacher to come is the teacher of example with the magnetism of not the mere spoken word but the deed done, of personal loyalty and completeness to

his own theory. The higher knowledge is there in man with amazing grasp and certainty, but the will is very weak to follow it amidst the desires of the flesh. The will to duty and right conduct even as against self-interest is thoroughly submerged in the over-worked objectivity and love of material possessions in our modern life. The precious thing should be salvaged with piety and vigour.

War is to any idealogist thoroughly illogical. Truly it is so. For violence never conquers. It fails in the end. But viewed as a mere functioning it is an undesirable and painful purging which throws out the excreta of human excesses and passions. It must and will die one day, if we do not continue to load our system with false food to please false appetites, with impurities due to a misdirected and selfish overworking of both individuals and institutions. Let us try to live clean, simple and contented lives, individually and collectively. Then the flame of war will die from sheer want of fuel. The glowing embers will turn to the coldest ash.

Then the last war in the world will be the most celebrated in this ugly chronicle, not for its poison gas and efficient artillery but for the extraordinarily wise, human and foresighted peace treaty which will announce as the highest and most inviolable duty of every man and State, the *Sanatanic* value that underlies the four religions and the three

institutions of man, to enforce which war has been a common and collective weapon of necessity. Fulfilling this great and difficult purpose, it will disappear like the ghost in the fable.

Such a glorious day is in our own hands. We can make it or mar it. We can speed it or delay it. We may usher it in to-morrow or put it off till the play of life is played out in pain and misery as now, to the long, last day of the Solar system. Let everyone choose wisely, and play manfully to hasten the day, each his little part in life, true to the great voice of his own inner and divine urge.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOAL OF SCIENCE

THE last one hundred and fifty years have witnessed the wonderful mastery of man over Nature. It is worth repeating that we owe a deep debt of thanks to the West for this signal service. This crowding of all effort in one direction seems to be needed as a preliminary help to take that wonderful leap on to the higher rung.

No mastery of Nature, however, will ever give us by itself the inner beatitude that is the final craving of the Spirit. And equally no inner beatitude will be really so without this exquisite control over Nature. The final harmony is difficult to reach but our patient and strenuous endeavour is to attain this salvation both from within and from without. Religion and Science shall coalesce together to achieve a higher form of cosmic power in man.

Our life is fated to be nourished for many hundreds of years to come, only by a complex food. The aim of Science is to provide it in increasing and easy measure without *himsa* or violence to any form of life in Nature. What the Great Buddha preached

as a doctrine of conduct for individual guidance and collective welfare, Science proposes to render into beautiful and human modes of action. The mission of Science, is prompted by the same idealism as the great Humanitarian and the First of Compassionate Souls. For, *ahimsa* is a doctrine of human relationship which renovates life to its minutest details. It touches every one from king to peasant with a strange compassion for fellow beings. It gives zest to life, hope to action, faith and idealism to social intercourse.

Our daily work in search of food is now stained with a hundred cruelties. At every step we tread on another, crushing and harshly using others to our own needs. Science has the song of freedom to all. Let man be liberated from dull, muscular labour. Let the bull now broken to the bone with overwork even in toothless ripe old age be liberated from the plough and the carriage yoke. Let steam and electricity step into the place of the bare muscle power of man and beast. He who thinks over the cruelty and toil that now win for him his day's feed, will refuse to eat even a morsel of such sweated, slaved and slaughtered food. I have often had acute nausea over my dinner hours, at such moments of introspective recollection.

Half the hardship of Science, in spite of its noble aim, is now due to the competitive base on which it is grounded. It is no prime necessity for its promotion, though it seems to lend it a vivid

interest by attracting to it all kinds of men as its devotees. This can be eliminated by a change in the motives for work, from love of self, to love of life itself for its own beautiful sake. The love of Science for its own glorious humanitarian ideals should take the place of money which now speeds its stride. The motive for work can be changed only by a change of heart and atmosphere. It is a collective and difficult work. But it must be done if Science is to yield its full and ripe fruits free of rot within.

The path is certainly long and tortuous before Science will render homage to everyone in equal degree by conveying to the door of even the humblest in the realm, its triumphant and relieving services which it now caters in some measure only to a privileged few. Steam-power has urbanised and roughened life. It has given modern industrialism all its cruelties and odious attributes which in essence do not differ from the slave labour of the ancient world. But the quick coming of electric and such other powers in the place of steam will carry the blessings of Science to all, and ruralise in turn the now urbanised life.

Even the present marvellous command over Nature is but a fragment show. It is but a glimpse of the magic circle. We are out for greater things with unseen and unknown powers. Electricity itself is but a compendious name for the many magic powers that lie in wait for the service of

man. In the breaking of an atom, there is power to do the work of the world for years, as Scientists say and we fondly hope.

We have seen great triumphs in bits in other directions, ripeness, fullness, and art-splendour in the Hellenic civilisation of the West, and soul-splendour in Vedic India and in ancient China. But they have perished or broken to fragments, because the virtue that glittered for a time, floated on the top like a drifting sheet of ice on the sea, irradiating the whole atmosphere for a brief hour. It did not belong to the species as a whole. It was the acquisition of a few at the top. It was never fully or even partially transmitted to the people. The throbbing pulse of Science is to make the achievement of one a common enrichment for all. It hopes to annihilate, time, space and distance and merge the objective form and glow of life into the beautiful all-shaped, one-shaped, nameless thing, the Soul, the Universal Soul, and thus meet in infinity Religion itself.

But the detailed emphasis of Science in certain directions is worth a careful study. The glory of motion has somehow moved man intensely more than anything else. From the very beginning, his attempts have been to speed the walking pace, and achieve the physical unity of this earth by doing away with distance. So Science has naturally bestowed its greatest attention on this subject almost to the exclusion of others. So much so one

is inclined to say that it has over concentrated, leading to a grave misdirection.

This love of speed has slowly changed the approach of our mind as well. It is all now one love of the outer form of things. It is the window-view that is making us turn our eyes away from our own inner life. We see everything from without. External beautification and comfort are still exclusively engaging Science and rendering it alien to our inner spirit, nay, even to some of the essentials of our existence.

If, in addition to the locomotive and the spinning jenny, we had also invented a cow-like machine which would convert grass into milk, how much more happy and healthy both calves and men would have been these years. The vegetable fat which the scientific man so easily converts into soap should be by a higher law turned by Science easily into a valuable food in a world of starving millions. But Science dances gaily now on the newest aeroplane careless of this higher call. The glory of motion has charmed and caught our soul in a whirlwind of dust and withered leaves. If the Science of invention which now probes into everything, could only get at the secret of breaking a passing and mocking cloud into a pure shower, or raise a monsoon from the sea at some sorely needed hour, instead of wasting its inventive power on the most terrible engines of destruction, there would be far less cruelty in the name of Science,

and more love and peace in this world. For there would be plenty for all and no need to fight for food amongst ourselves ; no drought and no monsoon-failure. The wicked will perish in the annihilating joy of plenty. This is the vision splendid whose radiance to see in full, Science itself should undergo perhaps an operation for cataract. The thin film of a false and impure glory that covers it now should be removed.

The cheapest prize in Nature is physical unity and the joy of motion. People shouted for it, and got what they shouted for from their greatest men in the past—the giant locomotives of speed, toys indeed in evolution's eye. This tragic failure to direct the scientific energies, liberated by the re-nascent impulse of the age into higher and real forms of utility, is due to the inefficient way in which all the three institutions have functioned till now. Lack of imagination and true knowledge of the higher needs of the human race have characterised their working.

Science has helped of the twin great arts clothing more than cooking in their symbolic sense. It has helped to achieve the easier and more clever and pompous deed, the mango-trick, and almost kept silent over the other. The decorative impulse is the greater in the second art and more susceptible to easy transmutations and magic work. Science seized it exclusively in a moment of vanity and has now worked it almost to a

triumphant issue. The primary art is now almost neglected, has even fallen into great disorder, the art that helped our emergence perhaps the most.

Our destiny depends a good deal more on this great art on which rests the fine art of living. Now and hereafter Science should walk into the laboratory of the kitchen forsaking the wardrobe for a moment, and there unfold with concentrated power the magic secrets of Nature and its own art.

Cooking and clothing, dispassionately viewed, are as yet the greatest things that stand to our credit. This is no picturesque view-point to adorn an essay. It is truth itself. Let us enquire into their true nature to know the extent of their real blessings.

CHAPTER VII

ON COOKING AND CLOTHING

HE who struck the first spark of fire in a careless moment of rapture, and he who invented the wheel in an hour of pure sport, occupy the highest places of honour as pioneers of Science. Both of them are unknown by name, like the authors of the Vedas. But they have laid truly and well the foundation of our civilization. On these two things, the spark of Fire and the Wheel, rests this great Empire of man on this planet.

Fire led to cooking, and the wheel led to clothing, the first among their many glorious achievements. The wheel is the initial step in the external mastery of Nature, and cooking in the internal. One is command over quantity ; the other is control over quality. The one is compilation, the other is assimilation. The one is impressionistic. The other is expressionistic. Both summed up in communion are life and progress. They are the secrets of creation.

They in their cumulative effect set free in turn, as reward for the discovery, a nascent intelligence in man, a gift to view the world as a whole and in

terms of general concepts. A new intelligence discovers a new thing and the discovery improves the very power which discovered it. This subtle law of interaction is, like the stride, a harmonious movement of progress. One helps the other un-awares.

These twin arts need to be very specially guarded, for they are wide and great gifts with far-reaching influences both on mind and matter. Government and Property are the guardians which we have evolved for the protection of these gifts, the results of a new intelligence which these arts themselves induced. Government gives us the limited freedom to cook and clothe as we please, to order our home life in some just proportion from the products of our own labour, and Property determines the field of such exertion for each.

Cooking represents the conserving, economising, refining, regenerating urge, nay, the very secret hints of immortality. It is of the very essence of judicious nourishment. It involves selection and reduction to approved and assimilable quality, and such a control for the first time gained over nature, to pick and choose and to shape and concoct such a vital thing as our own food.

All evolving is shedding one thing in favour of another. It is an increase in the intensity of functioning in one particular way. It is not mere specialisation, an inferior art which impedes progress. It is sublimation, the precious gift to effect

an atomic change and transmute low into high. It is the alchemy of the flesh. It is the secret process of evolution which only the Seer sees and knows.

In addition to soil and climate, mental intoxication, springing from the kind of feed you are given, seems to play an integral part in the final upward quality of a species. Cooking lowers no doubt eventually the muscle power of the race, the brute force, but vitalises and lifts the cerebral and nervous systems, the hidden spirit of the mind-forces as against the body forces. It quickens and enlarges them. From crude instinct to reason and intelligence, man has ascended with slow, painful but firm steps. But from reason to cosmic vision is the unceasing urge of the Future, best attained through definite means which Nature has scattered, like a few grains in a heap of chaff, for man to pick and choose wisely. Among the pearl-like grains that are the seeds of the Future, nothing is of higher value than a scientific feed leading to plain-living and high thinking, turning man near to an angel. An atomic change is in the air and will soon be wrought.

But all ascents in nature are complex and puzzling. Every gain, every virtue has a reaction. It has both an upward urge and a downward look. Cooked food, if it has helped us to a fine intelligence, has resulted in a more or less complete loss of civic self-respect and courage; a

thing which is unknown in any species of life except the human, and some low forms of civilised life such as the bee, and the ant. A system of slavery, one man meekly and humbly toiling for an idle another who takes almost the entire products of his labour, is perhaps the price of cooked food. We have now built up a civilisation which is a seven storeyed structure, beautiful to look at from without, but made up of one tier upon another of exquisitely low and mean forms of servility, one lording it over another. My birthright of the day's feed on my own independent toil, or death in its pursuit, which is the sturdy rule of the game in the jungle, is an exiled song in the thoroughfares of men. This fatal defect that is now impeding our progress on manly lines should be remedied by a vigorous and scientific importation of raw foods such as fruits, nuts, flowers and leaves into the cooked dietary of the race. It is for the voice of Science, Dietetics, a sadly neglected science in a civilisation which knows and enjoys only gourmandising, to say the final word of guidance. We wait for it eagerly.

Flesh foods distinctly lower the divine element in man as they only increase the bestial. Flesh food is the worst enemy of peace and love. It is instinct with explosive wrath and twisted power. It is sunlight energy captured and caged like gunpowder. Its behaviour is no better. Appetite is the worst slave to tradition, habit and instinct. So

we blindly continue on the old, inherited, nay collateral memory. For, even the anthropoid was an excellent fruitarian and owes his glorious progeny to his scientific feed. A non-vegetarian diet tends to racial suicide even in the sub-human plane of life. For, the price of carnivora is extinction of the race. Violence is death. We shall know it some day to our great cost.

Till man reaches the matchless and humane gift of even the smallest vegetable to take its nourishment from air without pain and effort and as an act of pleasure, he must continue to keep steady his scientific eye upon what he eats. If he eats the purest and the simplest, the freshest things plucked from Nature, he need never slave for others. He will get the courage to starve and die rather than to eat slaved food got as wages from another on bended knees. Hewers of wood and drawers of water, we need never more be. Civic courage to resist the tyranny and overlordship of another fellow will be the greatest boon to our evolving life.

Work and feed have an intimate, immortal connection with each other. Heavier the physical work, greater is the need for heavy food. Over-work, slaved over-work in the prison-house of another's home, is our greatest curse. It is servile over-work that is slowly undermining the vitality of the human race. Light and choice feeding is healthy. For, real human wants are few, and

our higher life both of body and soul is best nourished on the barest minimum. Less the feed, better is the quality of the mind-power and work ; nobler is the life lived and left. Many sins of the flesh then cease to live. They are no more.

All values are double. Excessive folly and wisdom go together ; so too cooking and clothing. Cooking is a priceless wise act ; clothing is the most foolish thing, a wastrel act, an objective projection of his own unleavened mind which man began to throw on his emergence. But it is symbolic of a dying evil, of a vice escaping in a continuous stream of foolish but healthy action. Constant expression perfects a virtue but kills a vice. By clothing, I mean not merely the mere art of drapery and dress, but all those great acts which externalise life, and feed the sense of pomp and parade that profoundly move and mismove life at every step in its speeding career.

Wisely applied, cooking and clothing work at but a common fountain, pouring forth a continuous stream of fertilising waters, into the Divine channel. But the fields and the seeds should be kept ready prepared for the reception of the fertilising waters lest they flow into the broad and eager wastes, and feed but the tares.

CHAPTER VIII

AGRICULTURE AND EMIGRATION

THE world balance is now greatly upset by the almost universal neglect of the primary occupation of agriculture. This neglect has even gained the quality of contempt with the advance of our industrial civilisation. The making of glass beads seems to give everyone perfect pleasure even over an empty stomach. Everyone is now quickly trying to throw the burden of raising his foodstuffs on some one else, more innocent and simple-minded, who will find the dull labour in the field a fit occupation for his own feeble mind. The West has led this tragic revolt against agriculture and looks upon the blacks and browns to till the soil, under their superior guidance from London or New York, and raise cotton, corn and oil for them in return for toys and machinery, woven fabrics and manufactured things. This desertion of the plough and disloyalty to Mother Earth are at the root of all our misery.

There is only one way to escape the coming chaos and insane destruction of modern warfare, born of this commercial jealousy and greed for the agricultural depots of the East. Every nation

should bring its maximum acreage under the plough, and encourage its surplus population to migrate to the rich and wide spaces on the earth. The cult of narrow and intensive patriotism for one's own parish soil imbibed in the school and college is the greatest sinner against the pastoral, nomadic, adventurous and inter-national instinct in man, and the worst enemy of happy emigration and economic freedom. This cult should change for the beautiful conception of the whole world as one home for all. An inter-national outlook is the greatest need.

Agriculture aided by free and joyous emigration is the only hope of avoiding the world-war that now waits in ambush screened behind factory smoke, and bales and bales of unsold goods. The solution is progressively simple if you but boldly take the first step in devolution and do the initial stroke of work for Peace. You can convert the huge standing army which swallows so much of a nation's energy, into a productive department aiding agriculture. You can turn the organisation for war into one for peace in peace time. Why should not the flower and cream of a nation's manhood now enlisted in the army be used in peace time for the promotion of agriculture, for the cutting and opening of irrigation and drainage channels, for the sinking of tanks and wells, for the physical training of the young and the ordered and sanitary life of our villages ?

The finest physique and the greatest endurance that have been, by God's decree, meant for the daily service of the nation, to break the virgin soil and keep it ready for the seed when the rains set in at the appointed hour, are now being cruelly wasted in barrack life, in idle drills, cramping the knee and fatiguing the calf-muscle. It is a pitiful waste of valuable man power in futile drills and marches. Let some true statesman seize the legislature and boldly turn this ready-made fund of man power, this splendid flood now emptying itself into the salt sea of death, into the thirsty fields waiting for the touch of the true hand of the tiller to return hundred-fold a grain of wheat or corn. Where would war then be, deprived of its chief emotional strength—Hunger?

If in the year of trial an unfair neighbour takes advantage of the absence of your army on peace work, greet every soldier invading your sacred land with all the marks of hospitality as India and China have always done, with the voluntary gift of a home and an acre of land, for he too has come to you only in search of food. He will smile thanks, an irresistible smile. He will soon turn his sword into a plough-share. This civil and civic courage to welcome with open arms the wrong-doer, why man alone has lost in the world, I wonder? He must gain it somehow to be sure of his place and to go higher.

The greatest sin of Science is the careless hand of help and courtship it has given to war. It has

One hundred years ago, there might have been the same ratio of poor people. But misery was not so chronic or moving as it is now. Even the humblest had his share of sunlight and air, the first requisites of health, and toiled in the open for his food and raiment. But the industrial civilisation has compelled a change, and driven the peaceful flock from its native rural pastures to the pen-hold, perspiring and hideous, of urban areas. The plough, the primary emblem of wealth, was forsaken for the furnace. No one is now inclined to grow the foodstuffs.

Agriculture has ceased to be the primary or the most honourable calling. Instead of foodstuffs, pleasure stuffs are now produced in plenty to soothe the cravings of a few. The clever man believes in producing only armaments and motor cars and in commanding others, the feeble-minded men, to raise the foodstuffs of the whole world. It is, in short, a compulsory equation in economics of the labour of one clever man as tantamount to the labour of ten average men. This fundamentally wrong and unsocial attitude results in the appalling misery of hundreds and the eyesore opulence of a few.

This is the result of a perverted industrial civilisation greedily and callously applying the fruits of Science for individual aggrandisement, though Science itself has a noble goal which is now but dimly perceived.

Meanwhile, busy man is perverting Science for selfish ends and exploitation. But the Nemesis is clear and near. He will eventually destroy himself. Because of this perversion for personal ends of the aims of Science, the world is now a welter of conflict and ambition. Even in peace time, war is waged and only the weapons are changed. The spirit is combative and is employed only for selfish gains. Gentility and humility are banished. Simplicity and self-cultivation are viewed as symptoms of poverty of mind and of matter. Our needs are growing daily and are never delimited. Everyone wants everything under the sun and the appetite grows into a silent but huge flame which needs more fuel to be kept alive. The spirit is never prayerful. All the qualities which religion inducts in man are fast disappearing. Clever adventure is worshipped, and character and goodness are left only for the blessings of text books. Intellect is no more the hand-maid of character, religion or humane ideals, but is a self-driving power, irregular and devastating like a forest fire in summer.

The only way out, the one solution of the problem of the poor, is a reversion to the old ideals of plain living, village life and agriculture, with the speed and the firm accent which modernity has given us. The siren call of Industry has made the Temple of Agriculture almost desolate. Food-stuffs are under-produced and luxury stuffs are over wrought. Free emigration to places where

Nature is rich and bounteous, and a maximum reversion to the plough will alone save humanity from the cancer of greed which is now devitalising modern life. A new spirit should come over the race of men, which conceives humanity as a family and this little planet as a common home for all. And this new spirit will come only from a new education. May God give us the strength to strive for this ideal !

CHAPTER IX

ON EDUCATION

EDUCATION is the blindest alley which man in his many explorations is now treading with anxious and uncertain steps in the hope of finding some day some glorious turning which would lead him into the promised land. Meanwhile he is in the darkest lane faltering at every step and only the more confused by his seeming progress.

The system of education and training we give to our young is enough to indict the future of the race. It is mere motion round and round, an empty waste of energy. Man shows here in the wielding of this subject, in pathetic combination, all his unshed weaknesses, his fear, his cruelty, his slave-mind, his innate lack of courage to tread new paths or break conventions. Tradition has bound him in suffocating leather. Every spontaneous act of freedom and joy, experiment, curiosity and daring by which he himself has come up, are ignored and denied to the young. They are forbidden ground.

The true school is the home and the best teachers are one's own parents, and life and Nature around.

The paid teacher is the greatest anomaly. It is the most perverted of the commercial inventions of man for convenience and pleasure. Education is a delicate task least capable of delegation. The mother is the true teacher of the child in the matter of emotions and the father in the matter of pursuits. But neither is able to do the holy work properly in modern society because of its wage-earning, competitive ideals, and a life of perpetual bustle.

Home which is the only natural school for every boy and girl hardly does the function now, for lack of time, taste or equipment of the parents who look upon procreation as an inevitable by-product. This foremost duty is delegated to someone for a fixed wage. The whole thing degenerates as all paid labour must. The school becomes a juvenile prison-house which succeeds in keeping the young from doing mischief at home. For, no one is there at home with the time or the mind to shape into splendid moulds of citizenship the valuable excess of juvenile activity and curiosity. The school itself with its ever-increasing bulk has become a rigid institution with minimum freedom and maximum discipline. Everyone is shaped to a cast-iron mould. Where a crowd has got to be managed, discipline is the first and only virtue, and order and levelling the greatest achievements. As the business has been growing colossal, with the eager spread of mass

education, Government has gradually stepped in, taking control of the whole scheme with some benefit and great harm.

This is the only altruistic duty of Government which has no direct bearing on property or revenue. So it does the duty very indifferently and with a resigned air of an expensive funeral ceremony over some inevitable, unescapable cousin of the fourth remove. Government should have nothing to do with education except providing the funds for the same, leaving its administration in the hands of thoroughly decentralised and autonomous bodies. Till the vital problem of the education of the young is tackled in a thoughtful and scientific spirit, we can never take a step in advance in any direction.

The net result of the present system of education is that even an intelligent person finds himself an adult fit to guide himself only at the age of forty-five or fifty. The first twenty-five years in the nursery and the school become a mere waste, as they are invented and modelled by the parents in collaboration with Society on the analogy of cattle pounds for irrepressible creatures. It is only in the next twenty years the real education begins in the bigger school of life, mixed with pain and struggle.

The whole ground should be cleared of all false and conventional notions. Just those qualities which have helped us in evolution so far and will

continue to help us along the higher path, should be gathered, remembered, worshipped and woven into habits of action while young. They should be religiously adhered to and improved by close study and eager experiment.

Of such qualities to which we owe our primacy in the scheme of things are our own daring and enterprise, the courage to tread new paths and a constructive mind-quality which, in its wide speculative ranges, is not afraid to go beyond the beaten tracks of safety. But very few show these, and often only when the chances for their full application have passed. The fruits are therefore necessarily poor. Our progress has been very slow and intrinsic development pathetically snail-like. The cause for this terrible waste of a fecund energy is the defective, and almost blind and cruel training which the young receive in schools and colleges the world over.

The education of the young, everybody agrees, is vital to our welfare. Theoretically the impulse is to do it on the most liberal and universal lines. But the lower instinct to conventionalise, arising out of Fear, the yet unshed heritage of the jungle, to walk the same path with the blessings of the herd, has yet a very strong hold. In proportion to the great energy put forth, no intrinsic progress is therefore really made, from generation to generation. We take the same track to the water's edge and drink at the same little pool, even though the splendidd

and vitalising river rolls on majestically, scarcely a yard ahead.

We standardise everything, crushing out individuality, diversity. Success is purely quantitative, and mass production the sole aim of the University. So the chemistry of the nature of man still remains a great mystery. There is no refining process going on in his composition, subtly changing him from generation to generation—no lowering of the bestial and no enhancing of the divine elements in him. The same passion, the same hatred, greed, jealousy, cruelty, love of power and exploitation, still express themselves in the same destructive tendencies, shouts and deeds. All our progress has but implemented better the modes of execution, but the objects and ideals are still as low as ever. A fatal law of eternal recurrence seems to hold us in its death-grip.

A drastic change in the methods will alone save us. Allow utmost freedom to the mind of the young. Give its energy the joy of spontaneous movement. Give it full freedom to roam at large, experiment and learn. The lessons of life are best learned from within, from self-made mistakes and self-invited failures. Look a little more to the present and the future, and far less to the past.

We now cling, like a limpet to the ageless rocks, blind and motionless, pinning our faith to a pious reading of the dead past, the mechanical portions of History, to its dates and battles, without ever

seeking to convey its emotion for the enrichment of our future. Our schools and colleges are erected on a sandy waste, strewn with the bones and the skeletons of a nightmarish past. And we cheerfully ask our youngmen to draw nourishment from this. Even saw-dust is kinder food.

Only a drastic change in school and college curricula will put us on the way to achieve a future for the race worthy of its own inner prophecies and higher tendencies.

The science of Agriculture is vastly more important for our well-being than the soul-blasting Science of Economics; Geography and Astronomy than History; Biology, Sociology and Eugenics than Law; Philosophy, Poetry and Music than Philology and Grammar. The pandit-like and pathetic passion for texts, rules and books, chalk and slate, should yield to the subtler and more pervasive joys of inculcating, by the magic word, in the mind of the young, the spirit of love, enquiry and zeal, not for cribs and annotated editions, but for that larger thing called life which includes in one plane the teacher and the taught. The cry everywhere should be for less of books and more of life, the beaming life of the present and the radiant life of the future, rather than the sickly and broken things of the past. And above all, produce the teacher who would or could keep himself younger than the youngest boy in the class.

Then some sure steps will have been taken from the bottom rung of the ladder, which we are now laboriously decorating with tinsel and gold, while the God-enshrined top is far away, invisible to us in the mists of a brilliant and strange sky.

CHAPTER X

THE HURDLES AHEAD

THE visible but unfinished hurdles are still many in the race-course of evolution, though we have beautifully cleared one or two. A catalogue of our own intrinsic imperfections that impede the progress on the way will be very helpful in seeking the divine peace and enlightenment that will be truly ours some day. The impediments are both external and internal. The subjective are the more formidable. Let us take the primary event, race-perpetuation.

We are blind and helpless in the matter of reproduction. The sexual act is now a mere act of primordial craving, an appetite indulged in as a stimulant or restorative to over-work, misery, pain and economic pressure of life—a mere reflex action to gain a low form of carnal pleasure as an escape from the unlovely and painful work and realities of modern life. But a higher law and aim run through the sex-impulse ; race rejuvenation, comprehension, increase of quality, vitality, and sweep. We have still to discover the higher mode of its use and activity resulting in evolution of types. We do not

know its inner chemistry, its abiding secrets, the subtle processes that transform and exalt the determination and quality of the sex. We obey some ancient impulse, as crude and old as the flesh, and reproduce the same types under the same laws of eternal recurrence without science, reason, originality or control. We have not even sure knowledge of the results. This happens even where the individual is the most civilised and the environment, the most splendid and self-determined. The great secrets of the sexual laws, and the biological transformations leading to race progress, the laws of ascending types are still as mysterious as ever. We are unable to transcend ourselves.

Nay, perhaps being late comers, we do not have even the knowledge and power which some of the civilised forms of low life, like the bee and the white ant, possess. They control and change the sex, qualitatively and quantitatively as the needs of their polity require, while we pathetically talk and write of sex control through base mechanical contrivances. Impregnation is still a random, physical act, willed and fruited by the unknown Gods, to whom we may only meekly break coconuts, and burn camphor and incense. The mind of the father and the mother do play but a very fractional, feeble and negligible part in the matter of incubating and evolving the child in the womb, and forming its first bias and approach to life in the

short but compressed and miraculous period of growth of nine months.

Science should resolutely apply its energy, daring and originality to get at this truth first before building the fastest destroyer and the best equipped bombing aeroplane or inventing the most deadly poison-gas. This is the first step to all advance on right lines. We shall but repeat ourself emptily and pathetically for all our success in the mechanical mastery of the world, if we cannot will our progeny as to sex, appearance, physical condition, behaviour and mental equipment suited to the environment which we know well and into which we are ushering them in. We are now helpless even in such a small matter as pigment or complexion over which even the chameleon has some high degree of control.

We are yet unable to transmit ourselves into our children, to the desired extent, our own definite qualities and habits however much we may value them. Some measure of heredity of qualities long impressed in a family there is, but it is so meagre, and its emergence or reticence so obscure or sudden and utterly uncontrolled by us, that it does not satisfy anyone as the basis for higher work upon it as a certain foundation. Again, our acquired characteristics, cultural or ethical, we are almost wholly unable to transmit. The son does not take the thread from where he branches, but begins it almost anew with the same tale of

monotonous and cruel recurrence. He goes to the same school as his father, and learns the same things over again. An infinitely sad tale of futile repetition is the story of man from youth to old age, from generation to generation, century after century. It is one appalling waste. Nay, the parents may be very highly educated at the time of birth of a child. But that does not save the child from the same tortuous path of agonised school and college hours the parents have undergone—no not even the certainty of the same success in college or life.

In short, procreation is now a pure, unscientific gamble, ensuring to mankind a very inferior kind of collective immortality on the whole, very much like that of the bee or the termite, with some little freedom here and there, for an individual rise and refinement in advanced age for a brief hour or two only to sink back to the old state on his death, leaving his own seed to go through the whole cycle once again, blindly buffeted by the same chances.

This capacity to transmit our acquired characteristics, mental and moral, spiritual and ethical, to the extent we desire under our environment should be quickly acquired somehow, if a higher destiny awaits us as a race. Physically, some fragment of our body in essential outline, some striking contour or some curious feature of bone, chin or curve, and a very diluted and uncertain quantity and quality of our other faculties, we do succeed

even now in sending down to our progeny. But the whole thing is so little, so slender that it hardly serves any definite purpose or helps us to realign the lines of racial pursuits on a higher plane. The sex-instinct has got to be sublimated into the highest forms of universal art and thought creations. Then only we can transcend ourselves and reach the next rung.

The mastery over Nature is still external. There should be effected quickly the penetration of Science into these higher, internal biological problems of life, winning the priceless secrets of the chemistry of evolution. The whole problem of race-production is still in a primitive stage of wonder, no better than the reverent wonder of the phallic worshipper. It is still in the region of the purely physical, and quite a long and long way off from the controlled, intellectual and spiritual radiance of perfect life.

Sex-impulse has a subtle and vital connection with our mind-power, with the whole range of our higher consciousness. Universal Soul has a dual expression of completeness in mind and sex. The refining of the one leads to the refining of the other. Mind and sex are mutually related as first cousins even as gold and mercury are in the realm of alchemy. Only you should know the secret flux to transmute the low into the high, the *yogic sadhanas* to gain the calm and beatitude and the infinite Bliss of a higher being who has sublimated his

sex-impulse till the mind quality has reached the transcendence of cosmic consciousness.

Among a large number of other problems, the following crowd on our attention for urgent solution if the path to peace and perfection is to be trodden quickly and quietly.

Dietetics and Medicine :

They have not delivered yet their message of an ideal minimum food for a maximum life of cerebral and spiritual activity going to the benefit of both the individual and society. Our whole life is still beastly in the primary sense that it needs muscular labour to gain food to support and nourish life. Some radio-active substance there is yet waiting to be discovered, probably some sublimated product of mere sunlight waits to feed man silently and surely, if only he would give up his ignorance and search for it, and bend his mind and open his mouth to the new streams of silent and peaceful food, unsweated, non-violent, that are only waiting to be liberated from the springs hid amidst hills and rocks, by the Aquarian hand of a Scientific World-Teacher.

No doubt quantitatively we have achieved in common with other forms of life a low degree of racial immortality, immortality of the species, which gives us the gift to carry on the struggle to the winning of quality. We have contrived so far, like the ant and the termite, to keep the birth rate a little above the death rate, and that is immortality

in a sense. This excellence in birth rate is in turn a question of feed and nourishment. But even this excellence of the digestive organs and catholicity in the matter of feed, man is slowly losing, imperilling even this primary virtue of tribal immortality. It is surely a sign of decadence when man finds himself, as he does in modern civilisation, depending for his daily food on products grown thousands of miles away from his home, and so changing his diet from the healthy raw and the fresh to the preserved and tinned imports. It means diminished vitality and longevity to the race and in the long run even total extinction.

The period of waste in life :

Nothing strikes a thinker more than the comparatively long period of uselessness which supervenes before man emerges into self-centred, purposeful activity. He is a burden on his parents till twelve, from twelve to twenty on his teacher, from twenty to forty-five on himself, and a source of anxiety and trouble to others. After forty-five, if his progress so far has not landed him in complete wreckage, he begins to think for himself, and turns into a useful citizen. He practically compresses the bulk of good of his life into one decade from forty-five to fifty-five. Then senility sets in limiting the fund of energy. This is the graph of the average run of life.

The fish-like innocence of the child, the charm of sportive childhood and the romance of the pushing

youth, the experiment, daring and adventure of manhood are repeated from man to man, generation to generation in one pitiless cycle of recurring waste. O! for the great secret power to contract these forty years of unfolding and preliminary training and travail, into one month more of maturing gestation in the mother's womb, the child performing in the womb in the additional one month the forty years experience of its forefathers before emerging on its own special work of mature individuality. It may seem a miracle to do so. But it is no more a miracle to one who knows that the child from its inception to the tenth month of its uterine life, performs nothing but this miracle of entire rehearsal of all the stages of its life, in the long ladder of evolution, from its humblest beginnings as the amœba.

The thinking woman has not yet striven a bit to abridge in her own womb, this wasteful training for citizenship of her own darling during forty years of open life, into the compressed and vital training and condensation of the whole by one more fruitful month in her own womb, the first and the most educative of chambers for the young. We have not yet gained this great gift, and Science has not yet shown the way, unravelling the secret knots.

The solemn endeavour of all statesmen and scientists, of all thinkers and philosophers, of all saints and seers, should be to win by united thought

and action some of these great gifts without which undoubtedly man will never be able to take a forward step in the real direction in which the divine goal of evolution rests. We should quickly gain the will power to reshape ourselves to a truly higher purpose by a beautiful harmony of the inner and the outer, with minimum waste and maximum expression, helped both by Science and by Religion.

Will the wise gods give the greatest of our men the light and the humility to work on the true lines for human uplift, and to evolve the new race that will inhabit this earth with peace and love not only among themselves but to the whole world with its millions of God's creatures, now subject to man's tyranny, vagaries, cruelty, and exploitation for his own selfish ends ?

CHAPTER XI

THE NEXT RUNG

THE reproduction of such a new race of men will be the fruit of the mingled effort of Science and Religion; Poetry, Philosophy, Meditation and Music. The Rishis of Ancient India have sincerely worked at gaining the intimate clues of such a higher life. Their *yogic* system with its fine and rising scale of *sadhanas* is one splendid intuitive attempt and strenuous search after these great and grand truths that uplift man from flesh-laden sorrows and pains.

They have instinctively gained at least one valuable clue. The secret of our future lies in the sublimation of the sex impulse into the highest forms of art, thought, and spirit, that transcend all, and work the miracle of an atomic change in our own being. Sex-sublimation directly leads to cosmic consciousness, and features every expression of that higher nature of man which belongs to the gods. Mind attains a fourth-dimensional perception when the sex impulse is controlled and transmuted into a higher mode of activity, into a purer form of creative energy. It leads to a vision of the

fuller life that awaits everyone who knows how to ascend the higher path patiently. In the highest teachings of the Hindu philosophic system, this control and beatification of the sex-impulse is the key-step in aid of all achievements. Our Rishis were such absorbed and profound thinkers that they solved the mystery of life by the pure and dry light of intuitive meditation. Their descendants, the Brahmins of to-day, meant to keep alive this sacred fire, and advance the spirit of enquiry, have discarded this noble inheritance, and turned into cooks and clerks, traders and stenographers, judges and ministers purse-proud and foolish, in the busy and discordant walks of life in the city. They have neglected the great task that is truly theirs, ignored the priceless inheritance from the Rishis. Otherwise India and the world should have been a happier and better place for all.

But these *yogic sadhanas* of the Rishis, being personal and experimental, by their very intricacy and difficulty were confined only to the few, the elect few, and not known to the masses. For this limitation, though it depresses the humanitarian thinker, perhaps they are not to be blamed. It is perhaps life's own law, the difficulty and measure of all evolution. When a new species springs, it springs from a narrow hip and womb. Only a few survive the long march, up and down through snowy, slippery hills, and get into the promised land, there perhaps producing the chosen race in their new and appropriate

home. The inheritors of the new civilisation, the members of the new race, can never communicate to their own father the secrets of their own exclusive triumphs, even as man can never tell and train his monkey-father to leap the chasm in Nature, and become a different being, as he himself became one inspired morning and divine moment.

And so the question of questions is asked in a voice laden with all the sadness that is in the life of the race. All this sweat and labour, goodness and generosity of the whole world tend wither; for the collective gain of an unknown and alien few? If man is in the bottom rung of the divine ladder, what is the next rung like or will be? Is it man's own or somebody else's? Will it be man himself reshaped and reclothed with new powers, visions and beauties, or only an alien and different creature altogether strange to human eyes and ways, usurping the first place on the earth profiting by the toil of man, even as man had profited and emerged from the monkey.

Strenuous West believes in the collective redemption of all, that that superman to be is not a new, choice and alien species sprung from discarded man even as he had sprung from the monkey leaving it to the nuts and fruits, and the gloom of the jungle. West thinks that the highest future in the Solar System is only a great, good and general refinement of the existing species of man, lifting everyone,

even the meanest pariah to unascended and common heights of glory. It is a democratic shower of rain for all.

But East seems to think the other way. In the splend'd grove of its own lonely meditations, a different vision, not so good or humane, has gripped it. The Great Future is not to all. You can level up only to a certain height. Your tallest growth is fixed by Nature, by the very laws of your own once triumphal emergence, even as the speed and soul of the quickest and the wisest snail are fixed by a higher law. Everything may and can reach that maximum, and no more in the form and vestige of the species to which it has the honor to belong. Like the oyster that yields the pearl, even if it is the mother of a pearl-like thing, it will have no part or lot with it in flesh, bone and life. It is a strange and alien progeny.

Man has perhaps only a lowly measure of immortality like the ant and the bee, perhaps a little better and happier in some respects. He will crowd his own vats and holes, calling them exquisite pleasure-cells of his own palace world. He may exist for ever like many other living creatures that refuse to die out. But the New Race shall be elsewhere, roaming about the universe, different beings in a different sky. Individual perfection through the secret paths of the sex-less *yoga*, old, new, and yet to be discovered, will lead to a choice, new and limited species living in a different way, place and

plane, and differing from man as much as he differs from the monkey.

Man is a chaotic and heavy breeding race, limited by flesh, body and mind to ascend as he is the cosmic heights of the universe. But he will be excellent compost to yield a nobler strain of beings. They will inhabit a new place and roam everywhere from star to star, from sky to sky, floating in waves of light and sound, air and ether. They will neither molest man nor comrade with him. The true Heaven is as wide as the universe to the knowing Soul, to the *jnani*, to the *jeevan-mukta*. But there is no space therein to make celestials of one thousand eight hundred millions of men and women in every stage of life, with the sure increase of a chaotic twenty millions per annum.

Such is in rough words the thought and feeling of the East. It has probably some scientific ring as an ultimate truth, judged by past biological phenomena. But these are thin, oxygen-less regions of thought where speculation would drive one mad. We need stay therein no longer.

He who does a stroke of true work for his own time and for his own day, does more good than he who dreams of remote, ageless and nameless future and the infinite bliss it holds.

But my own humanity inclines me the other way, and refuses to see a vision of final redemption for man in the evolution of a new species, springing

in the course of his own tumultuous seeking after the Great Truth, with whom he shall have neither part nor lot, but who will be the proud inheritors of the earth. The next rung in my ladder is reserved only for my own species, a peaceful, benevolent, duty-doing, possession-less, passion-less, self-respecting, self-working, all-knowing, purposeful creature who looks almost like man except for a quiet glint in his eyes, and a strange and celestial glow of Light in his face.

But we should all strive for it both individually and collectively, individually with fullness, absorption, detachment and vision as the East has always done, and collectively with vigour, strenuousness and public sacrifice as the West has always shown in its quest.

Human life has not yet learned to move in deep peaceful, and harmonious strides. It is still violent and jerky. It should learn this quiet motion before man could bring some joy and peace to everyone of the two thousand millions, who now talk of evolving into a higher being.

All evils create their own anti-toxins in the course of their active expression. The sense of possession which has helped the emergence of man from the anthropoid is slowly creating a new race with a new sense, passion-less, possession-less, motive-less, detached, deriving its impulse to action from a higher range of cosmic consciousness. The sooner we discover and define it as our

principle of social action and help its perfect assimilation to aid our own ascension, the better it will be for us all. The Next Rung will then be gained, and a new race and a new religion ushered on earth for another millennium of peace and love among all and to all.

CHAPTER XII

IN MY REPUBLIC

THESE eleven chapters of reverie and speculation incline me to sketch in a concrete form the outlines of my own dream world, where all these ideals and longings are translated into working propositions, step by step. Let us canvass the *first* steps.

Government.

The village shall be the unit and starting point of all national construction.

With the splendid facilities for locomotion which science has now provided for us after infinite toil and experiment, and with the possible supply of power as cheap as water, town life need not wear its present look of vile congestion and empty pile of mere brick and mortar. The future town will be a garden city of beautiful distances made up of several villages. Village and city will be merged in each other. One will not know where the village emerges into the city and the city retires into the village.

The village shall be autonomous in every respect, and the source of all power and dignity to the State or the nation. Its voice shall be heard

effectively in the highest councils of the nation and its prosperity and full life the first duty of all governments. It shall exercise its power in its own right and not as a fragment of a delegated and rescindable authority. This vital issue has been inverted now. The metropolis reluctantly yields some minor powers to the village after impoverishing it for its own pampered life. It shall be the other way, the village transferring to the town of its own accord its surplus and relevant powers which pertain to the common good.

It is a necessary evil; some kind of election is inevitable for carrying on the work of government. The health of the administration of the councils rests entirely on the kind of franchise you give to the people, and the electoral machinery you devise. Universal adult suffrage is the best and most commonly agreed; one vote to every adult, male or female. Sex shall be no disqualification for any office or work. Property, or payment of tax or rent shall never be by itself a basis or qualification to vote. But literacy shall be an indispensable qualification for a member of any council whether of the village or of the nation.

Half the misery of modern democracy is in the graded franchise that has been in some manner made dependent on property, and the costly way in which the huge electoral machinery functions returning almost always only men of property in a large majority in the national councils.

Self-interest instead of the common good is therefore instinctively thrown into every legislation, and this blue vein of aristocratic self-interest or class interest poisons every legislative enactment of the present day. Democracy has only increased the number of profiteers sharing in the common loot of governmental plunder, but has not improved the average social and economic standards of the people. The slum-dwellers who are always in the majority are as discredited and ignored as ever, and used and over-worked without remorse or pity. The rich man, because of his riches, is rarely able to see the common good with self-less eyes. So he converts all legislation both consciously and unconsciously into self-protective measures, and deepens every year the rut of misery only into a broader channel of perennial trouble for humbler folk. Democratic legislation as it is only succeeds in sugar-coating the pill of misery with a thin layer of seeming justice and fair play.

Till members of Parliament and public workers are recruited from a holy order of men pledged to poverty and public service holding no lands, no shares, no bank account, no property, no trading interests anywhere in the wide stretches of this earth, till such a holy order of active monks dedicated to political and social service and humanitarian work, rise, seized by a true *sanyasin* spirit of work for the common weal of the world in the most disinterested, just and humane ways, there

is no redemption for man, no chance for the proper, healthy and just functioning of our great national institutions, political or cultural; we shall go on merely breeding for all time the same low types of ruling and ruled classes, the latter distinguished for their hunger, and the former for their appetites.

Non-ownership of property in any form is a great asset to any political worker, much more to a member of Parliament. Pauperism coupled as far as possible with a high degree of culture and character is the essential qualification for membership of any deliberative or legislative body. In the matter of selection of a member, ability and intelligence should bear a lower value than character, sincerity and taste for the work. In return for these services, the members of a council are entitled to a subsistence allowance from the general revenues.

The village council shall consist of one member for a population of every one hundred reckoned as per census taken once a decade. Population shall be the basis, and not resources, fertility or superiority of any other kind. The qualification for membership shall be non-ownership of property and literacy. The election shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

The village council shall be assisted by a chief executive officer with a small staff. It is best to make honorary the chief executive offices, and attach great dignity and respect to them. But if

necessary, a uniform monthly salary shall be voted without reference to the nature and quality of their work. This executive staff shall carry out the wishes and resolutions of the village council. It is the cabinet of the village council, not recruited from itself. Such executive officers are likely to have a good local knowledge and discharge their duties well. The village council shall be the chief governing body exercising full administrative powers.

The village council shall have financial powers to levy taxes in its own right subject to rates and conditions fixed by the provincial council. A minimum of fifty per cent of the tax so collected shall be left in the village itself for promoting the common good, agricultural, educational, sanitary, religious and other needs. Twenty per cent shall go to the Provincial, thirty per cent to the National Council of which ten per cent shall go to the Assembly of Nations. According to the needs of the country this ratio of contribution may be varied subject to the vital condition that the village shall not be starved by over-taxation and depletion of its resources in any direct or indirect manner.

The Provincial Council shall consist of one member for every lakh. The election shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage. In those countries where the step is from the district to the nation, this council is not necessary.

The National Council shall consist of one member for every quarter of a million, with the

village councils as the electoral body. Where the population is less than fifty millions, the members shall not be less than two hundred. Where the population is more than one hundred and fifty millions, it shall be one member for every half a million. The election shall be on the principle of proportional representation by the single transferable vote.

For the Assembly of Nations, one member for every five millions of population is the best basis, elected by the Provincial Councils or National Councils thrown together as one single constituency.

The executive of these National Councils shall not be chosen from among themselves but shall be third persons elected by these bodies. The executive may sit, debate and vote. By a majority vote, they may be removed, and a new executive elected. The National Council shall elect a President for the nation with a term of five years, the Provincial with a term of three years, and the village every year. The life of the Councils also shall be for a corresponding period. The Presidents shall have the power, in their respective spheres, of co-ordinating the legislative work of the councils, the executive work of the cabinet, with power of veto, dissolution and ordinance on exceptional occasions with the usual safeguards.

The members of Councils shall be paid subsistence allowance as they cannot own property.

All executive offices of the higher rank shall be made honorary as far as possible, but if a particular member of the executive is a very cultured pauper, he shall be given a subsistence allowance. All artisans and workers with technical skill employed by the government, and menial servants shall be given a uniform salary. The pay of no officer in the State, however high, shall exceed one thousand rupees a month or one thousand pounds per annum.

The foreign policy of all the nations shall vest in the Assembly of Nations, assisted by a Supreme Court which will give special opinions on intricate points of international and constitutional law. The Army and the Navy and the Air Force shall be taken away from the jurisdiction of each nation, and vested in the Assembly of Nations, with which the Assembly shall enforce its will against any rebellious people. The recruiting for this service shall be international, from all races and peoples with an eye to honest and suitable material. All nations shall be disarmed by this transfer to the Assembly, and shall keep only a police force to maintain peace and order at home. Under no circumstance there shall be conscription, and all recruiting for this world-force shall be wholly voluntary.

In the long run, with the greater evolution of our race in quality, political instinct and the science of government, the world will be blessed

with only two institutions, the Village Council and the Assembly of Nations. Of course, the ultimate ideal is the complete disappearance of the need for government by a profound transformation and perfection of human nature itself.

Taxation :

It shall be both on lands and on income. Small holdings shall be exempt from tax, especially when owner-tilled. A graduated and progressive scale of increasing taxation for bigger holdings shall be levied. The rates shall be fixed by Provincial or National Council as per definite principles of assessment based on soil, irrigation facilities and nature of produce. The actual levy shall be made under the authority of and by the village council.

There shall be no sea customs duty or inland toll for the free passage of goods throughout the world. Free trade and free passage of goods are the greatest essentials for a healthy unification of the different peoples of the world and for cultural growth and contact. The sins of trade are rendered the more harmful leading to disastrous wars because of the tariff wall which each nation raises for the protection of a particular industry. Free trade will eventually teach man neither to buy nor sell, and to avoid the temptations of the market place, but satisfy his own wants by his own labour.

Property :

The equalising of the food sources of the world so as to make them available for all is the

goal of government. Three acre holdings shall be encouraged by suitable legislative enactment making them inalienable, impartible, and ever-lasting. Government shall aim, without abolishing private property, to equalise all holdings of land and help all men to work for themselves and by their own labour raise their own food, and never slave to another for wages, a position which makes the slavery of human life cruel to the sensitive and thinking mind.

Money-lending for interest shall be abolished either by prohibiting interest at once or fixing a legal maximum of four per cent, to start with, and lowering it every decade till the great readjustment to true standards of wealth takes place, ushering in peace and happiness to all. Borrowing is the habit that Satan has left behind as his most vital progeny. The greatest day waits for man when he ceases to be a borrowing animal and boasts no more of his 'credit' with fellow-men.

Irrigation works and cheap production of hydraulic, electric, solar or sea-born power for distribution to every citizen to relieve him from dull daily labour and to aim at the production of true wealth shall be the main endeavour of every government. Science aided by government should solely fix its exploring mind on these vital issues and aid production in a way less subject to the caprices of Nature such as monsoon failures. Power will become cheap as water and the birthright

of everyone, even the humblest in a remote village, if only scientists solemnly resolve to help the poor. The atom shall be broken and made to yield its infinite reservoir of power for the service of man. The wind, the water and the sea, the sunlight and the radio-active substances now idling spitefully before our very face shall soon be harnessed to our service. Science is out to do all this, and government shall guide it quickly and wisely. Mere thought shall be power some day.

Miscellaneous :

Man's need as a speaking animal is great. A common second language for the whole world shall be adopted, preferably English, Hindi, or Chinese, now spoken by the largest number.

A common currency, weights and measures shall be brought into existence. This will come under the legitimate extra duties of the Assembly of Nations.

Luxury stuffs shall be discouraged. The rough distinction is that what goes into the stomach is necessary stuff, even if it be a high class costly biscuit; what goes to adorn the body is luxury stuff even if it be so primary a thing as clothing. All industries, even spinning and weaving, shall be nationalised. Agriculture shall be individualised.

The most difficult thing is to drive the first pile that bends the river and changes its direction. The first step that creates the atmosphere in favour of the new order of things is the most difficult and the

most important. The air has got to be vivified with the light of a new-born meaning in life.

All progress is the result of a peaceful interaction of forces between the individual and the institution he has built, between body and soul, between mind and matter. It is a harmonious act. The first stride once learnt will fix the gait and last for ever. It will take us peacefully along the road to the goal. Such a supreme moment has arrived for us to take a new step in a new direction; now or never.

Revalue all your institutions, purge the base and the selfish. Reject the old and the craven. Exchange the outer control of life for the inner, the transient for the permanent. Assimilate into habits of action the new, the soulful, the selfless, the transcendent.

Our desires and appetites have kept us too long in bondage. Break the prison-cell of fleshly wants, and sublimate all hunger and appetite into one pure celestial flame which needs nothing to keep it bright and burning. It is the cosmic Light and Vision. We will then find in ourselves the magic impulse for the great and harmonious spring in evolution which will take us to the next rung in the ladder whose top rests now on the very footstool of God.

PART II

THE URGE OF RENASCENT INDIA

CHAPTER I

INDIA'S PLACE AND WORK

THE whole world is longing now not for political unity as a final step but for the realisation of the cultural and the spiritual Oneness of all life. Renascent India is bound to help substantially in the fulfilment of this ancient reverie of the race. To the higher civilisation towards which we are all moving, India has a special message to give as the most faithful and persevering of the caravan. But it is in our own hands to speed up the caravan or become the worst stragglers impeding its march.

Everything depends on the proper direction we give to the new impulse, the vast creative force of the Renaissance, now over-spreading the Indian sky and seeking expression like the majestically rolling and full monsoon clouds. It is the first drizzle just now; all this fret, fever and unrest of the decade.

But Fate has already found us only wasting the precious, spring waters in the side-drains. Let us take the warning to heart, and keep ready our fields, with the soil turned and manured, and seeds

sown. To the extent to which we build our Swaraj India on the genuine longings of our race, on lines of utmost freedom and equality to all, to that extent we shall fulfill ourselves.

A study of our ancient civilisation as reflected in everyone of the present day problems that face the worker in Indian politics, sociology and religion, is valuable for a proper understanding of the world problem. On their helpful and constructive solution, rests a part of the relieving of our own and the world's burden of woes, and its march to a higher civilisation as a whole.

For India is a sub-continent with one-fifth of the human race, comprising every stage of civilised life. China is as populous as India, but its life is quite even. India is a replica in miniature of the whole world, and as such affords good materials for the study of the larger problems, almost as if it were in a compact laboratory specially made for such a critical study. It is a microcosm of the hopes and troubles of the whole world itself. It has an ancient culture evolved by absorbed thinking and continuous experiments in the higher unknown. There is a large storehouse of traditions, helpful hints in the many institutions which many movements have left in different stages of fulfilment or dilapidation. India has a correct and sensitive pulse disclosing to the specialist the diseases of life in its widest range. All this is splendid material and atmosphere for

creative evolution, for a philosophic enquiry into the Science of Government.

India has been faithfully experimenting from remote antiquity on these lines. It has always concentrated its mind on some of the first problems of life distinguishing the essential from the accidental. It has eagerly sought the grand truths both in busy life and in solitude. Its one great quest has been the ways and means to higher forms of peaceful life, ever eager and struggling to reduce the bestial and the lower elements that resurge powerfully at every stroke of action that physical life needs for its subsistence. It has felt throughout and kept in view the divine urge. The Vedas and the Upanishads, the Gitas and the Puranas placed in the philosophic crucible always yield some definite principles of social action of permanent value in all changing circumstances and in all stages of an evolving society.

The manner of stating the truth in the sacred books is admirable. The conclusions only are there in the form of terse rules. There is no elaborate reasoning to obsess the mind of the reader and provoke him to counter-arguments which land him finally into the chaos of polemics. All reasoning is but a partial statement of one's own rich and incommunicable experience. It varies with the individual. The ways to a peak are many. If the peak is made visible to the eye, each knows from his own

emotional and spiritual abode, the nearest route to the radiant eminence silhouetted against the clouds.

India's variety is the guarantee of its own final excellence. It comprehends everything. It has given shelter and food to every culture, race, religion, and sectional interpretation of life. It has none the less achieved among these conflicting elements a wide cultural unity, an ethical synthesis of rules of conduct for all, for all time, a Sanatana Dharma, a code basing action on impersonal motives and selfless principles.

India has achieved all this because of the extraordinary excellence of its ancient political machinery and its relation to general life. The secret of this excellence was in its splendid political decentralisation and the minimum of government it had all along exercised within its own frontiers. Its organisation was the least, its administration the healthiest and noblest minimum. The citizens did not waste their lives on barren clerical work in the cells of the secretariat, but lived them in the open in the most prayerful moods of philosophy and meditation. Politics, in India, was never played as a preliminary game for aggressive warfare and conquest. Politics discharged within its own limits its proper function of being the hedge to the broad and green acres of the cultural and spiritual activity of the nation.

The Indian system is worth the most intimate study by all students of political science ; for, hints

of creative evolution it has in plenty to the observant thinker. India has a living cultural and spiritual present, and a future, even in this mechanised age, because of the strength of its decentralised and full life in the villages. Though one hundred years of a highly centralised government have now maimed its proper functioning, it has still preserved its culture, social structure and religion, ethics and philosophy, without the aid of violence or propaganda. Because of the exceedingly small measure of bondage or dependence its social and general life has on the government of the country, the best in India has never been political, which may be maimed or destroyed in the volcanic upheaval and sudden changes inevitable to all political life. It has always been cultural and philosophic.

Even to a casual observer it is evident that the whole world to-day suffers a great deal from excessive political action at every step leaving no energy or freedom for any kind of cultural or spiritual activity. To such a world, weary of politics, weary of elections, weary of war, weary of wasteful work, India has a bright solution to offer, a full message to deliver, a rest from all fret and fever of action, from over-work with which Europe and America are now over-saturating their civilisation, and poisoning their free lives.

So India's message is worth a patient hearing. It is a necessary complement to a world movement as a whole. Will the West, with its "superiority

complex," with its strident racial pride, care to listen to the song of Peace, which India has ever been fluting, since the dawn of civilisation? But this message India can and will deliver in full only in the renascent atmosphere of complete freedom. It is part of the world's work for its own sake, to help India and set it quickly on the road to liberty.

A captive bird in the cage, will it ever sing its sweetest songs in its gloomy cell, when the leafy branches wave their welcome before its very eyes?

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS WRONG WITH INDIA NOW ?

THIS is the question asked alike by friend and foe. The mind in travail of a subject nation expectant with freedom is psychologically the most difficult to analyse. India is now in a state of unique unrest, for within the last one hundred years everyone of its cherished ideals, political, social, cultural and spiritual has been thrown into the melting-pot. All values are being inverted and tradition ignored. The least by which it has lived, political values, are now being made the most of, absorbing the entire energy of the nation. The most for which it has lived, religion, duty and good conduct are relegated as optional luxuries indulged as recreation during idle hours of meditation or emotional exuberance. Minimum government has given place to maximum. Individual freedom to perfect and prune oneself has been overshadowed by a gospel of collective service to humanity carried on in the wage-earning spirit ; the more exploiting and wasteful the office, bigger the salary attached to it. A rampant materialism nourished by a logical and

scientific rationalism is sapping the strength of our cultural and spiritual ideals.

This twist to the straight growth of centuries has naturally sent a shiver of pain along the spinal cord of the nation. Even this sudden shock carries with it an evolutionary urge, some amount of useful cerebration. Under the impact of these new forces, India is moving quickly to a period of great Renaissance, likely to be one of the most eventful if prudent and timely use is made of it before the tide begins to ebb as it often does suddenly in our life and history.

An Indian Renaissance means a great promise of service to the world. But the period of this renascent activity is always a delicate and anxious one. The greatest care is needed to guide it safely, along the rapids of a bubbling and joyous new life. And it lessens the presence of mind and adds to the tremor of hand to know that the frail bark is laden with gold-dust.

But the signs are hopeful. Because the younger generation of Indians are learning that all ideals have their worth only in the measure of their transmutation into deeds. The gift of vision, the usual mystic idealism comes easily to the Indian, and the younger generation have shown proofs of an earnest and impatient desire to turn the ideals into indigenous deeds racy with the genuine marks of the genius of the race. It is all the more remarkable that this work is being

done quietly with bitterness towards none, without a sense of possession or exploitation or even of victory, without the usual mercantile desire to make money incidentally out of any chance deed.

But this rich work charged with idealism, still floats like cream only on the surface, and touches but a choice few with the joy and dignity of a new love and labour. When this spirit permeates the whole nation and the ripening becomes full, the fruit-gathering will be by basketfuls everywhere, in Science, Literature, Arts and Religion. The depth of the permeation will determine the extent to which Renascent India will have a splendid record of service at the shrine of humanity. There is prospect of excelling even Asoka's India, if only politicians, both white and brown, do not take an all too powerful command of, and wholly absorb the national energy in mere political work, even of rebuilding Swaraj India.

This beautiful vision of a full Indian life will materialise only if India gets the higher freedom to earmark and proportion her energy to the greater quests, true to her ancient national instincts. Otherwise the renascent cloud-spread sky will scatter but scanty showers on an empty and arid waste. The surest of India's national instincts, whispers the great secret, minimum time for political work and maximum time for cultural and philosophic inquiries. The slightest violation of this Dharma would lead to lasting injury, and

one of the most fruitful moments in Indian history would be wasted.

India had ever been till fifty years ago the least governed country in the world. Its greatest wars were never national. They were mere engagements, limited in number and poor in quality, waged between two isolated groups representing the wasteful, vagabondish and adventurous elements creating friction in society. They had never the sanction of our wisest men or the support of our ablest or most respected citizens. They were a kind of safety-valve which let out the stray, militant and harmful forces of every generation. This is the correct reading of Indian history, and reveals the only basis on which we could have found the time to evolve the grand cultural unity of centuries amidst so much of political breaks, violence and disunities.

Life's highest achievements depend on the line of your own preferences. But only in one line are you given to make your mark. You may combine your energies to bundle a nation into a great and powerful unity in only one way. That is God's decree. If you make it political, it is only political. If you make it cultural, it is cultural. National energy is adequate to function in only one mode. Man is so made. India knows this great secret of the gods and prefers the cultural and the philosophic to the political. For it ever rates government a minor, and to a considerable

WHAT IS WRONG WITH INDIA NOW ? 99

extent, an immoral adventure of man on this planet, however necessary the adventure may seem to be for the moment.

So there is an intimate connection between over-government and cultural deficiency. Political efficiency is the cheapest and the most attractive in immediate rewards, even as trade and shop-keeping are. But according to the higher values of evolution, administration is the most barren work. It is wasteful, artificial and unnatural. One man is never meant to rule another. It is an inversion. Like all inversions, it is exciting, seemingly good and joyous for the moment, but never healthy, and terrible in reaction when the time comes for proper reckoning and assessment of the final values of a deed.

This great ideal of minimum administration and politics, and maximum leisure for good and humane work, India has ever cherished with unbending devotion and unflinching courage even amidst severe disasters. But the British Raj has centralised everything characteristically, and true to its own commercial bent of mind. Hence the intense suffering and unrest of India. There is a spiritual yearning to reorganise our Swaraj on our own ancient lines of maximum freedom from all governmental work, worry and interference. Till this higher freedom is gained, India will never be in a position to give out to the world its full-throated song of Peace, Love and Knowledge.

So India's cry for Swaraj is a longing for one of the greatest ideals of humanity, individual refinement and perfection resulting in the complete release of all need for any form of government. It is not a mere patriotic or sectional or national cry. But it is part of an idealistic movement springing from a higher range of human emotions, which is bound to bring peace, love and rest to the whole world, and in particular to the over-worked, politically sweated West. It will refit and fertilise their wonderful energies, with a fruitful message and a calming idealism, and advance them to a higher line of life.

India's cry for Swaraj is not for an Indian replica of the existing forms of government, with an insatiable appetite for clerical work, pen, paper and stationery which sweats the whole world of poor millions to nourish the vampire's life of a rich few. It is a Swaraj with a message of Minimum Government, Peace, Love, Rest and Harmony to the whole world, now sleepless and aching with over-work, hunger, blind repetition, pain and waste.

Will the great God help us in the real struggle against ignorance and misery on earth or prolong it wantonly for another cycle of suffering.

CHAPTER III

FEDERAL OR UNITARY

THE advocates of a unitary and highly centralised type of government for India are not vouchsafed with an insight into the meaning of Indian history. They are subtle friends of world-wars and blood-relations of the greatest enemies of peace.

All unitary governments are designed and function only for war. The unitary type is the invention of a small and compact state. It is a virtuous invention in such a case as it then functions only to keep internal peace and order, equality and justice among its citizens. It is an enforced growth when a nation of moderate area and population is threatened by war on all its four sides by powerful and aggressive neighbours, on account of its geographical position. Or it is a profitable game of adventure when an insular and homogeneous nation assured of peace within and safety without, turns predatory, obliged to live on trade, commerce and industry, selling glass beads for shiploads of wheat, as the patriotic soil cannot lend itself to agriculture, and the citizens are unwilling to

emigrate to places which produce food, and share in the humble work it means.

These are the conditions under which unitary government thrives functioning solely for the purpose for which it has been brought into being, atrophying every other faculty of the nation. A nation under unitary government, even under the first category of very small nations, never finds it possible to lead a rich and full life. All national energy is concentrated and made to flow in a rut, the military and political rut. The political consciousness transmutes to lead even a stray particle of gold. In such an atmosphere, culture, ethics, morality, religion, poetry, philosophy, music, everything slaves only to feed the political machine, and impregnate the political consciousness, suffering a pitiful change in the process. This machine in turn always functions leading somehow to war, the moment surplus energy is stored. Such a nation gets saturated to the bone in ideas of blood. The air becomes heavy with the lust of power. Even the smoke of gunpowder is fragrant incense to its dilated nose, nay the very oxygen on which it lives. The sleuth-hound does not get more excited to joy and speed at the scent of blood than a unitarily governed nation does at the prospect of war.

One-fifth of the human race, with a civilisation ancient and coeval with the very emergence of man, with a philosophy and religion nobly

wedded to peace and non-violence, should stoutly refuse the soul-bondage of a unitary government.

Renascent India is still in the cradle somewhat heavily and foolishly smothered with swaddling clothes, old and new rags. But it remembers and feels that it has come to deliver a message towards World-peace and Federation of man. Unitary government is the sword which will cut its cradle strings.

Indian history is witness to this. The short-lived unitary form of liberal government of even Asoka and Akbar, two really great men who would get into any list of the twelve greatest men of the world, failed in the end in spite of their acknowledged humanity, power, wisdom and benevolence. Why? Because it was opposed to the genius of India. It was a denial of the cultural message and fundamental aim of the whole nation. Government is a slender rope bridge across the deep and turbid river of collective life, not a rope-bag of bondage to gather therein the dried leaves and twigs.

Anyone who has set foot on this ancient land of Bharatavarsha owes homage and allegiance to this spiritual ideal. Even the highly different and exclusive Muslims have felt this magic power. The Indian Muslim, saturated in the mystic ideals of India for over ten centuries, will nobly lead in due time the whole of Pan-Islam, to the Promised Land of Peace, and place the splendid Pan-Islam

block to raise the lovely structure of universal humanity.

The communal trouble that is now darkening our sky is but a passing cloud of ominous and unhealthy vapours rising from the swamps of political misdirection of the stream of national life. These dark mists will pass away when the breach in the river is closed and the swamps get dry for lack of illicit water.

The Muslim voice too will then deliver only this message. For, this message is of the soil of India. It is the unseen but ever felt offspring of its rivers and seas, hills and dales, plains and forests. It does not belong to one tribe or sect, or to any one race in particular. It is neither Hindu, nor Buddhist, nor Muslim nor Christian. It is the precious gold-dust that rolls in its majestic, snow-fed waters which go down the throat of all alike, and impregnate the blood and the mind. It is a message of peace, reached through federation, decentralisation and surrender. Every voice, Muslim or Hindu, will soon sing its praise. For it is the message of India to the world, not of one race or tribe.

If a large country, a sub-continent like India with three hundred and twenty millions of infinite variety and of endless resources, be forged into a unitary government, practically a handful of men controlling its political power-station, the main switch would surely be turned off, in some spiteful moment, on all light and culture, goodness and

humanity. Aggression would then be as certain as day. At least the whole of Asia would be drenched with blood, and this land of peace turned into a slaughter-house.

Never; never. India will revolt to a man against this cruel idea and vulgar ambition to forge a sub-continent into a mighty sword which may be drawn by any political adventurer of requisite audacity, against humanity, Asian or European.

Cultural and spiritual unity is the thing the whole world craves for, not political unity which only the breed of Napoleons want to use for their own ambitious purposes. If the sovereign power of all governments could be broken now into tiny pieces full, functioning and alive in the Village Councils, man would be far nearer peace and security than under any other form of government. India will never assist its own self-destruction voluntarily by voting for unitary government.

India had escaped a paralysing unitary government till this last half-a-century. It was our cultural greatness and our eye to the future happiness of the human race as a whole that prevented, by the unanimous wish of the people, the soul-killing mask and armour of a centralised, unitary government which gathers all life into the ugliest knot. The future is only to those who lead thoroughly decentralised and politically free lives. For, decentralisation is freedom and life. Centralisation

is captivity and death. It is a blind boulder across the stream of life at its narrowest bend in the high hills.

It is the result of human experiences—politics is a soul-killer. Rulership is the meanest of necessities, harmful even if it be carried on only in a spirit of comradeship and compassion. For it makes other activities impossible, except perhaps trade and commerce, its mutual friend. It is opposed to all the higher urges in man. At best, it is a medicine in the transitional stage on the wayside of evolution. In moderate doses, it has a cleansing power. It is a help to check and clear the system of impurities. In overdoses, it is a fatal poison, more dreaded because slow. Government is a medicine, labelled by Seers as a slow poison, and administered by quack politicians generally in over-doses to show quick effect, and the excellence of their healing art, in the short period of office given to them in these days.

How good and clean our lives would be if only every citizen remembers this central fact! Our Swaraj must be free, spacious, self-contained and self-evolved, laid out on the lines of our ancient Dharma with love and liberty to all. The heart-centres of our national life should be spread out in the unity and perfection of our many villages and never be gathered together into an ugly knot like London or New York. The West is paying dearly for its centralised national, political and

industrial life. The prophecy of the twentieth century is the triumph of village life, simple, loving and peaceful. Such Swaraj as the West enjoys, is hardly worth a pin's head or a cat's tail, where the many toil for the few. Let not the child of Renascent India be deformed by mal-feeding and tight clothing.

CHAPTER IV

INDIAN STATES AND BRITISH INDIA

TO harness the full resources of India to the harmonious work not only of peaceful internal administration but also of authoritative and useful work in the Assembly of Nations, the Indian States' present isolation and separate functioning should go. The solution of this difficult and delicate problem is undoubtedly vital to the larger solution, the emergence of a stable, Swaraj India. But the difficulties are not so great as they are made to appear largely owing to the spectacular position the ruling princes occupy in India, and the impression they manage to convey abroad and to the powers that be.

It is good to remember that ninety-five per cent of the Indian states are very small ones with scanty resources and population. Only about a dozen states really count. Even they, most of them, are very recent formations. They were created by the personal valour of their founders only very recently during and after the break up of the Maharatta and Mogul powers. They are all more or less a hundred years old. Even during this short period, the active exercise of peaceful and undoubted

sovereign powers by them was very much uncertain and chequered owing to the unsettled times they had passed through. And after the British Government became their over-lord, till within very recent times, almost the beginning of this century, the political agent of the British power exercised such full control even in matters of internal administration that the rulers were almost nominal figure heads gracing a powerless gadi.

And the measure of liberation the rulers have achieved recently is entirely due to the resurgence of Indian Nationalism in British India which led to a change of policy on the part of the suzerain power with reference to the Indian States. This great debt which the Princes owe to the Indian Nationalistic movement is not recognised in current discussions. Much less is it felt by them, that the governance of India is a common cause and a common benefit, and everything else should be subordinated to this paramount ideal. This lack of perception is all due to a faulty political atmosphere and education. But we have hopes in the patriotic traditions of these ruling houses when the critical moment of national unity and settlement, in the wake and fulfilment of an international purpose, arrives, achieving the divine design of a peaceful life for India and through it for the whole world.

It is said that the Samurais made the glory of modern Japan possible by the noblest act of

voluntary surrender known to history. When the occasion comes, both the Muslim and the Hindu Princes will surely make a voluntary surrender of their treaty rights and privileges in exchange for a common Indian citizenship so that they may the better bring to the great task of national reconstruction in Swaraj India, the fine personal qualities they certainly now possess.

There is yet another vital movement in India whose fulfilment is impossible with the Indian States as they are, isolated and repugnant, like alien matter in the flesh. As India now is, it is only a beautiful vase broken to pieces and mis-pieced together again, making an ugly thing of the whole. The desire to carve India into linguistic provinces is a healthy desire for a decentralised and free life which seeks for its fullest expression a favourable atmosphere, and a soil racy with indigeneous traditions and ideals. It is a vital movement quite on the right lines, if properly guided with a humanitarian and international outlook. It should not degenerate into a mere patriotic shouting for local names and fames, and a vision which falsely glorifies every thing provincial into something great.

This desire for homogeneous provinces on the linguistic and cultural basis can be satisfied only on a thorough redistribution of area, be it British India or Indian States. In such a scheme only one thing is open to the ruling chiefs. It is a noble,

voluntary surrender of all their public rights to the governance of their States. This would help the nation as a whole by setting free their talents, and applying them to the larger national issues instead of their own parochial problems and pleasures. It would effect evenness of administration in all the areas. It would quietly contribute the most to the consolidation of India and its emergence on the world-theatre with full authority in its legitimate rôle.

And above all, the glutting sense of riches and possession which so vilely poisons all life now, especially the political, and a little more pronounced now in the life of the Indian States, should yield place to the sense of duty, right conduct, public welfare, and common good and justice from the humblest to the highest. Any one domiciled in the sacred land of Bharatavarsha is always touched by this noble and ancient ideal of fixed duty and detached action. Then only the Indian Renaissance will not turn out to be a mere dry wind that passes overhead displaying a few white clouds, kindling hopes and dashing them to the ground.

The Indian Princes are as much of India as any one else, and the world waits for their true service, more for the quiet radiance of their manly work than for the glitter of their choicest diamonds or the purest necklace of flawless pearls. They must feel a common pride and joy, and join hands with

us in the great humanitarian world-work that is the purpose of the century.

An ideal of economic equality coupled with political liberty in a world of the least governance is the inner urge of these renascent times. The fulfilment of this ideal will profoundly transform human nature, and take us to the next rung, almost a new being.

Who can obstruct the descent of this flood of celestial water springing from the high mountain ranges from above the melting snow-line ?

CHAPTER V

THE INDIAN VILLAGE

THE Indian village is ever worth a serious study as an ancient rendering of a fine civic ideal. Now it has a living attraction. For, 'back to the village' is the cry of Renascent India. It is a preliminary to its achieving anything great. Before India can do its share of work for the commonweal of the world, it must put its own house in order and cleanse the feeding sources of its own genius. In the past, it was our village life that kept our culture pure and intact, the flame steady amidst dust-laden gusts of wind. Conquest and invasion did not injure us. They were assimilated at the expense of a few political and military adventurers and ambitious dynasties, rendering the national pulse only the more live and vigorous for such purging. So careful and wise was the distribution of the life-centres of our polity. They were never gathered together into an ugly knot. These tiny village republics acted like the cells in the respiratory organ, and cleansed the impurities of an ever-growing people. Coral-like, they stood the tide of time and assured for India cultural unity and permanence.

Why? Where is the magic in village life? The answer is, man is both gregarious and solitary—gregarious for gathering experiences, and solitary that he may chew the cud in loneliness and leisure, and assimilate them in a mood of transmuting rapture. Man too much alone destructively feeds upon himself, too much in the crowd he becomes a mere twig on the sea without drive or initiative. Village life beautifully harmonises the two, and prepares man for a higher plane of action, a simpler and more fruitful existence.

The Indian village, as a serious and successful social experiment in this direction, deserves a critical study. It has a special value both for its own sake as a vital Indian problem and for the message it seeks to convey to the whole world. Even as mere arithmetic, ninety per cent of India, one-fifth of the human race, live in the villages and follow the plough. From a higher aspect, the Indian village is steeped in the sweetness and tradition of a continuous life with which India has not blessed many of its political institutions.

It is a good thing that attention is now centred on rural problems. It is timely. Disease reminds us of health. Decay brings ideas of renovation. Ever since the transfer of India to the Crown, the Indian village has been slowly crumbling into ruin like the pagoda of its own temple. Pedants and professors who specialise in prophecies for the day teach us to suppress a tear at the happening

of the inevitable. They talk of merciless world causes and pitiless economic laws. But thank God, a new wind is now blowing all over, with rain-clouds on the sea-line.

The pure Indian village is somewhat rare now but not yet extinct. Many of its characteristic features remain. Within the last fifty years the mainspring has snapped. But the wheels have not yet stopped clicking and the hands still continue to show time in obedience to a long impulse.

A true Indian village or a homogeneous group of villages nestling together within the well-marked boundaries of meandering rivers and roads, is always a self-supporting unit. It is a perfect whole, a complete thing not merely in the excellence of its soil and climate but also in the outlook and temper of its citizens. It has a definite atmosphere. It satisfies the first conditions of decent life. It raises its own corn and oil adequate to nourish its population. It has enough cattle for milk and for agricultural purposes. It has its own artisans to serve the primary needs of civilisation, though not its refinements and luxuries. Weavers, carpenters, smiths, barbers, washermen and potters work together for the commonweal of the village with a devoted heart, for their interests are well entwined with those of the land-holding classes. For they too hold *maniyam* lands on service tenure from one generation to another and the *maniyam* is the choicest acre in the village and their pride and

pay. The village temple crowns this material framework. It inspires all labour with a selfless joy. It promotes and keeps alive the unity and co-operation of the different classes in the village.

The real beauty and strength of the village system lie in the simple harmony between capital and labour. The one is intimate with the other. One works for the other and the need of each which is limited by a long course of tradition is the scale of reward. So, minimum is the conflict. The village prosperity is firmly secured. Indeed, Capital and Labour are, to the casual eye, almost undistinguishable.

Every artisan and labourer is paid primarily by an allotment of land in the village adequate to keep a family in comfort as tropical needs are, though not in luxury. Certain fixed recurring duties are the incidents of the tenure. And extra work is remunerated by payment in kind—paddy, ragi or maize. The efficient monetary system of the civilized but bankrupt world plays little part in this primitive but idyllic society. The carpenter who fashions the plough and the blacksmith who forges the share have their *maniyam* lands and free residential quarters. So also the barber, the washerman and the potter. There is hardly a man in the village, who does not look up to agriculture as his primary profession. So everything on which the prosperity of agriculture depends is carefully looked after. Work has the joy of recreation and

the sweat on the brow is a pearl-like drop. For you do not sweat for another. The manuring of the fields, the clearing of the silt of the channels, co-operative irrigation and drainage of the fields, tank-digging and temple festivals and sundry repairs are done with a fidelity of spirit and devotion of heart that lift common work to the level of a sacred duty. When so many have to be provided with lands, none holds so predominant a share as to ignore or paralyse the small holders.

Now we shall consider the internal arrangement for the actual agricultural work in the fields. Every labourer or tenant, like the artisan, has his own free quarters and his *maniyam* lands, usually half an acre. He is paid also daily wages in kind on active field days. In addition, he has a share in the gross produce varying from ten to twenty-five per cent. He is entitled to certain perquisites which include a pair of cloths on *Deepavali* or *Pongul* and on certain fixed festive days in the year, about half a dozen. Every birth and death in the house of labour is entitled to a cash commiseration from capital.

There are also a few petty officers. They too are paid mainly by an allotment of lands. The *Talayari* has his *maniyam*. He is the village watchman, an important person who combines many offices in himself, chiefly police duties and the summoning and organising of labour for field work. The *Niranikan* has also his *Maniyam*. His

chief duty is to irrigate the fields impartially and attend to the growing crops, be they of the rich or the poor. In addition, he is entitled to a sheaf of corn on every threshing day in the harvest season.

Then superimposed on this simple framework is the celebrated Panchayat system which governs the village. It is a body usually of five and the work is honorary, an example which might well be followed by the central Executive Government of any country in the world. This village Panchayat is the only effective Government which the average citizen of South India had known and cared for till the British power reached its mighty, centralising arms from Delhi so as to control and shape the smallest inland village.

In the Panchayat, it is the president who really counts. He is often a hereditary holder coming from a family reputed for its learning, piety and character, and owning a decent share of lands in the village. Neither wealth nor intellect by itself had ever commanded great respect in India till British Raj began to reward with well-minted and shapely coins, mere cleverness and energy. Piety, learning and character were everything. Theoretically, the chief Panchayatdar has great powers, to summon and chastise any one. But tradition and his own broad humanity and culture fix him within a just orbit of *Dharma* and village work. The other Panchayatdars act as silent checks on any likely

abuse of power by the chief. The one common ideal is the efficient cultivation of the land and a simple life of peace. If the mind is not very much cultivated in the modern sense with a plethora of books and an array of humid lectures, at least land and life are to the utmost. The weeds are pruned with incessant care. A full, humane and moral life is the reward. Nature and men are golden in the true Indian village like the ripening corn in the field.

Nature has made every thing perishable and the Indian village never attempts to preserve Nature's gifts in the cold storage of coins, copper or silver. So whenever any one has surplus grains or vegetables that must surely perish sooner or later, he distributes them gladly to his fellowmen on improvement work or religious vows or general philanthropy. What is raised by co-operative labour is returned to the villagers, if not in the exact ratio of the quality or quantity of work of each benefited, at least fairly and adequately. So no one is actually unemployed or destitute in a true Indian village. The secret of this prosperity is in the universal devotion to the plough as the primary emblem of wealth and the trade-seclusion which the village enjoys.

The above sketch may seem ideal but it is real where the essential conditions obtain. Even to-day there are a few *Inam* or tax-free villages on the banks of the Cauvery which have this loveliness

and peace because of the shelter they have from the howling trade winds of civilisation. Once it was the rule.

This idyllic peace is possible only on certain conditions. Let us now examine the external rules for this internal prosperity. There should be no exacting Central Government above the village Panchayat, which resorts to direct and heavy taxation on land. There should be no export of food stuffs to any considerable degree in return for luxuries. Agricultural products should never be exchanged for the industrial.

But, to many, these are impossible rules under modern political and economic conditions especially in India. A costly and huge central Government, coupled with an agricultural population which has developed a taste for industrial manufactures which a village can never produce without maiming its identity, has rapidly hastened the decay of the Indian village and has almost blotted out within half a century one of the fairest and most ancient of our institutions which survived many changes and onslaughts for over twenty centuries.

Now let us examine the decay and the present condition of the Indian village. Previous to the advent of the British, political control was never effective. A central Government never functioned in India with capacity to levy regularly every year for even a decade or two a fixed tax even from

remote villages. Political power shifted like sand dunes on the sea coast, and the Indian village was never really within the grip of a Central Government for any considerable length of time, except for the Punjab and a small tract round Delhi. The financial and currency net was never woven so close and strong as to catch even the smallest fish frolicking in the sea. Predatory raids there were into the hearts of villages now and then, but the plunder was limited by the carrying capacity of the horseback--foodstuffs weighed heavier than their worth in gold and occupied more area in transit! Neither horse nor man had the infinite mechanical greed of a huge monetary system which sucks the life-blood, like a vampire, to all alike invisible, itself unenriched and unsatiated.

A central government is no doubt a blessing to a few but it is hardly one for the many, unless it is content to collect only slight and indirect taxes and devote them for the spread of a life of plain living and high thinking. Let us see how an Indian village fares now. Owing to the growth of population, almost every village has now reached its maximum capacity. In India, land is directly taxed. A single small holding of even the fraction of an acre cannot claim any immunity from land tax. Roughly a village pays from thirty to thirty-five per cent--and the percentage increases if the yield decreases, as the land-tax is fixed--of its gross income as revenue to

the Government for the privilege of being governed and gets nothing in return in terms of food stuffs. It really means that a village exports three months food to pay for peace and protection and to keep alive the towns and high officials, and correspondingly it starves.

In the wake of civilisation new tastes and habits are being acquired which are neither nourishing nor necessary. In return for cloths from Manchester, soaps from Paris, sugar from Java, matches from Sweden and kerosine oil from America, another thirty per cent of the food stuffs of a village are exchanged. And the drink shop under license from the Government which make a good revenue out of it, completes the exploitation of the poor, voluntary and involuntary. After these several items of severe drain, a village is now left with food sufficient for only three or four months in the year. Even in an Indian village there is and will be an unequal distribution of this three months supply. So what is left, is a bare subsistence even for the big land-holder. The labouring classes suffer acutely, and, more and more join their ranks in the general ruin. *Maniyams* have been either annexed by greedy landlords or have become unattractive. For, agriculture has become unprofitable under these conditions. The common co-operative work on which it thrives, such as silt-clearing, manuring of fields and rearing of cattle, are naturally neglected. The joy in

work that springs from a sure harvest is no more. In a decade ruin is certain. And ruin has come.

Nor these only. The worst evil that has now befallen an Indian village is the quantitative and the qualitative depletion of its best men in the wake of these initial difficulties. The best men, its hereditary *Panchayatdars*, are no more in the village. They have fled to towns for a living, as vakils and clerks duly hoping to become Judges and Magistrates, Collectors and Council Members. Our vision, in the wake of Western ideas, nay our very bones, have become commercialised. Ambition, unreal and ruinous, is driving us away from real and nourishing work. The eddies of the market place have caught our soul. Its shouts and excitement have deprived us of the voice of the simple folk and the joys of humanity.

The remedy is simple on paper but difficult to work out in practice. The habits, ideals, taste and outlook of the people should change from the exotic to the indigenous, from the luxurious to the simple, from the urban to the rural, from the raw new to the very old. Simple life should once again be fixed as the ideal for all time.

The revenue exactions of the Government should considerably lessen and small holdings be totally exempted from tax. The Government should bestow more attention on irrigation and rural needs and think more of corn which is India's need than of cotton. It has done so far very efficiently only

revenue collection and police duties. It must hereafter function more in accordance with the genius and traditions of the people and at far less cost. It must revitalise the hundreds of Indian villages by reviving the old agencies which rendered the Indian village a little paradise. Its preservation is the first duty of any Government. The duty is clear to one who knows the significance of an Indian village and its importance to the world.

What is the meaning of an Indian village? What is its significance to the world?

The Indian village offers the only solution to the economic ills inherent in all progressive society which remodels itself for a higher stage. It enshrines a great and a human principle. It recognises the fundamental right of man to be paid a salary not in accordance with his skill but in accordance with his needs for honest work done and paid in the most primary form of wealth, assignment of lands. In the eye of the Indian village, wages are equal for all, for stomachs are an equal span for all, be he the cleverest artisan, or the most average tiller of the soil.

Energy, intellect, piety and character are best rewarded in India, not in an upward and soaring scale of salaries, but by increased affection and respect of the people. Is this not a lesson to the West and the East? The payment is never sumptuous. For sumptuousness is not at all in the line

of our philosophy. We take a pride in limiting our needs. We always honour simplicity, character and piety. We do not worship the mere intellect as they do in the West, for it is after all only a means to make a full man, even as an engine is to a factory.

The Indian village stands for a great principle. Every form of labour must be paid equally, be the worker, the highest State official or the porter who handles his luggage, for the true economic needs of men are equal, as hunger is the same the world over--two measures of paddy for each per day. This is the rich cry and the world-message of the Indian village.

The Indian village is a bright crystal which reflects a great civic ideal. It is the most direct and cheapest form of Government. It is India's solution to the craze of over-government, costly, grinding, sterile, pale and unshapen, that is now sweeping into an ugly and futile knot the best brains of the world. Simplicity alone can save humanity. The Indian village is the very embodiment of simple life.

The Indian village is not a necessary accident in an agricultural country. It is the fruit of a philosophic enquiry into the highest wheelings and the lowest circlings of man. Our Rishis have built it as a hermitage for collected humanity on the way-side of evolution. It is an ideally fit abode, for men of learning, piety and character. It is the

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working place for the worker and the cloister for the scholar. The one could change easily into the other, like a cloud into the rain. It is the best reconciliation between the perpetual demand for action which matter makes, and freedom from action which the spirit demands. Even as the body is to the soul, the village is to a body of men—a haven of rest for the water-laved and storm-bitten ship.

CHAPTER VI

SOME PROBLEMS OF SWARAJ INDIA

THE problems of Swaraj India are seemingly many and diverse. But they fall under one central line of activity. Ultimately they resolve themselves in terms of the health and vitality of the villages. The Government of India lives and functions solely for keeping unimpaired this vast net work of tiny republics, the vital centres of our national life. So the foremost of the present day problems is agricultural indebtedness.

1. AGRICULTURAL INDEBTEDNESS

Next to cooking, man has ever been a borrowing animal. But agricultural indebtedness in India has never been so acute as during the last two or three decades. The causes are both internal and external and play upon and nourish each other with progressively destructive results.

The population has long ago reached the maximum feeding capacity of an Indian Village. In normal years with good monsoons, a typical Indian village produces barely enough foodstuffs to

nourish its present population and, strictly speaking, affords no surplus for export. But the real phenomenon is tragic. An under-fed population is obliged to export its foodstuffs. Owing to "a higher standard of living" in the wake of a new industrial civilisation, twenty-five to thirty per cent of the foodstuffs grown in a village are exported in order to buy industrial products, necessary and unnecessary. This payment in foodstuffs—corn, pulses, and oil-seeds, for industrial products, is one of the far-reaching causes of the agricultural indebtedness of the country and of the all round starvation. If one industrial product is exchanged for another, one evil struggles with another, and keeps up the show of prosperity at least of the market-place. But when agricultural products are exchanged for the industrial, blood is exchanged for rose-water. However exquisite may be the aroma, it would hardly be nourishing. Such an exchange can never be fair and equal even if Indian. And much less fair if foreign.

Again, a day's industrial labour is never held in the economic and financial jugglery of the industrial world as equivalent to a day's agricultural labor. Even if desired, it can never be reflected with precision in the complex, huge, shifting and selfish monetary system of the modern world. The exploiting industrialist silently assumes and takes superior wages for his labor, skilled as he calls it, and a fortune for his happy invention or

speculation. The poor, hard-working peasant pays for this and goes under.

To escape this mighty industrial and fiscal salt-sea flood, you need a spiritual life-belt, a reversion to a plain life which does not seek the joys of things which cannot be made at home. Only this simplicity can radically cure agrarian indebtedness. Field-labour is dull and irritating, uncertain and irksome. A motor car is nice ; the gift of motion is tempting. But you cannot sell a year's harvest to Ford and live on mere motion.

Another chief cause is this. Twenty-five to thirty-three per cent of the foodstuffs are exported to pay *kist* or revenue to the Government. The return to the village in any material shape for this compulsory gift is nothing, except for the Village Munsif's and accountant's salary. Swaraj India's first duty to Indian agriculture lies in the just revision of the whole system of land taxation and tenure so as to make the incidence fair, light and even throughout.

So the result is that every village exports or is compelled to export from fifty to sixty-five per cent of its produce, and no village can really afford this as a surplus after the legitimate needs of its population are satisfied. So the indebtedness is chronic, which tends steadily to lower further the agricultural prosperity.

Certain brave measures are necessary. In the first place, the redemption of the mind of the Indian

from the glamour of a luxurious life should take place immediately. Plain-living is more imperative than even high thinking. I distrust the mere intellectual. Piety and simplicity, meekness and reverence have higher places in evolution.

As for practical proposals to relieve present distress and indebtedness: Land Mortgage Banks and Co-operative Banks to lend at four per cent should be started. The Usurious Loans Act should be so amended as to penalise rates of interest above four per cent. Nature yields only three per cent to sweated labor. This will have the effect of transforming idle sowcars, living on the toil of the industrious, into farmers.

Credit is misery. It tempts and ruins. The speculative instinct breaks out into a slow and self-destructive fire. Law and public opinion should enable the creation of three-acre holdings in perpetuity and embalm them for ever by rendering them impartible, inalienable and tax-free. This will check extravagance, greed and speculation and keep the poor man on the straight path of industry and virtue in his own small farm. The theme is wide. Sympathetically worked out in detail, it is utterly practicable. The idea is as old as the greed and perversity of the ruling classes. This one measure will do in the long run more than anything else for the self-respect and joy of humanity. Man, on the final day of peace and love, will no longer be a borrowing but a happy,

self-sufficient, cooking animal, with a triple vision of the universe.

2. MASS EDUCATION

Next in importance is mass education. In point of literacy, India of all civilised countries takes the lowest rank, though by the peculiar vitality of its traditional culture, there is a high degree of general intelligence and keenness of average outlook. It is good to be cultured without the neurosis of a school and college life, and the dreary hours of a pile of text-books. India is cultured no doubt in this way. But the modern needs and the urge of a higher purpose require the broader and intenser results which literacy alone gives. The present school education is utterly divorced from life and is meant to help not the students but the book binder, ink and paper merchant, printer, slate and pencil maker and such odd tribes who would immediately go out of employment the moment education is set on right lines. Oral instruction, personal experience, peripatetic life are of the essence of the education of the young. Experience gathered in play in an atmosphere of utmost freedom free from awe or fear gives the correct impulse to the proper growth of the mind and makes one a fit citizen for life's varied work and trials. The Scout movement is the most excellent thing we have so far achieved, and the

best I have known as a first step in the right direction. Our schools with their bare mud walls, screening Life and Nature from the eager, juvenile eye are the worst prison-houses man has built for his own children to keep them away from real learning. Teachers are melancholy jail warders weary of their sightless vigils, with the monotony relieved for a moment with a gleam of joy on the pay-day. The deep shade of a banyan-tree or a mango grove, by the side of some water with sand dunes all over kissed by the truant wind, is Nature's own school for little children. In such a fine little Ashrama, the rearing of the young on the most beautiful and natural lines, is a creative work of joy for its own sake. Every village should have at least one such lovely meeting place for the young. And with the minimum of slate and chalk, pencil and paper, books and notes, the mass education of the three hundred and twenty millions should go on on the most hopeful lines. Then India would gather the fullest of the coming Renaissance, and leave a priceless epoch of great achievements for the benefit of posterity.

3. MILITARY EXPENDITURE

The next problem is the huge military expenditure. For a peaceful nation like India which has always received with every mark of hospitality every invader, this huge standing army is

an inversion of its harmonious life of love for all. The army should be quickly cut to nothing. India would incur no risk greater than it had incurred these five thousand years. We need be afraid of no invaders by sea or land if only we follow the Sanatana Dharma of our land, and not the materialistic creed of making money somehow by exploiting others.

It is only the lust for trade and commerce and riches that create the appetite and need for wars and standing armies on the most up to date lines. Wipe out the causes of this fevered thirst for gold and for your neighbour's right to his daily food, life would be one lovely dream of peace. Armies would be but ugly, barbarous shows in such a world. War-mists would melt into thin vapours in such a sunshiny, warm air.

Reject the huge, false monetary and economic system that secretly waters the noxious plant of war at its roots. Cast off all things which you cannot make by your own hands and vow yourself to a life of utmost simplicity. Disdain to live on any man's labour but your own. Interdependence, commercial, political and social is the silken cord of bondage. Cut it with your keen-edged mind. You will find yourself one fine, magic morning freer than the freest bird in the air, and your voice now laden with an ancient sorrow will change to a voice of ethereal music.

4. THE COST OF ADMINISTRATION

The cost of Indian administration is the heaviest burden. The Civil Service, if it is heaven-born, is most earth ridden. It is most dependent on worldly goods. It is most pampered and most richly paid beyond all proportion. It makes everyone sweat the most for nothing in return except an empty word and a name. None in India need be paid more than one thousand rupees a month, even the Governor of a province, and the District heads not more than three hundred rupees a month. The whole scheme should be slowly graded down till the atmosphere for honorary work is created, and everyone is willing to work for the love of it, as an eager player in the greatest play of life for the mere joy of playing it.

Some of these problems and many more on these lines crave for immediate solution. The load on the peasant's back, because of these selfish follies of leading men, has grown pyramid-like almost breaking his spinal cord and driving him mad to anarchy and chaos. Swaraj India, to justify itself, should immediately solve these problems, and enter on its inheritance with a solemnly vowed programme. Its mission is high and the coming days are spacious.

The lure of the world has ever been, since man learnt to sail across the seas, commerce and gold, trade and economics. One perfect rule of life

is, neither buy nor sell, nor enjoy a thing which your own little fingers cannot shape for your joy. But man has strayed far, indeed very far, away from this golden rule. Currency, backed and unbacked, in paper and silver, has kept the world always limping after its ideals, the many always poor and the few ever rich, and none contented or peaceful.

O! India, this has never been your Dharma. You forsook it that you might buy and sell in the world's market place. Never will true Swaraj be yours till you learn neither to buy nor to sell for copper or gold. Your thinkers, sad at heart, watch with anxious care your going astray from your ancient Dharma, losing your soul that you may buy and sell in the world's market place, in paper drafts and telegraphic transfers. The all-ailing world asks you to do your part of the common work, lifts its eye to you for a new religion and a new order of men who will bring love and peace into the Federation of Man, and not scrap-iron or shining bits of glass.

We want Swaraj, we want freedom for all, not only for our own sake. For, the present Indian unrest, though immediately political, is finely saturated with the compassion and the culture, the refinement and the emotion of Buddhistic India. Swaraj India has a message of service to the whole world. He is a traitor to the human cause who seeks to stifle this voice or imprison this aspiration.

CHAPTER VII

THE PROMISED LAND

INDIA is now undoubtedly in the early stages of a great Renaissance whose life-giving, life-renewing energy if properly used will compare most favourably with any of the greatest periods in Indian history; the fruitful and splendid dawn of the Vedic period or the morning glory of the Upanishads, the spacious and mighty days of Buddha and Asoka, or the strenuous days of Akbar and Shivaji. The air is now rich with the political cry for freedom. But it is only the exiguous voice of a great soul in revolt, an ancient life in the infinite stages of another renewal, the deep disorders that prelude an atomic change that transmutes copper into gold. We are now almost in sight of the promised land.

A full and felicitous life with political liberty, economic equality, cultural and spiritual growth for all, life in the Indian village has known in the past to the measure to which each age could transmit its best to the Time-spirit. The coming new age with the ample and wonderful

fruits of Science, will convert the now stagnant village life into a little paradise on earth, if only Swaraj India establishes the twin-contact both with the true currents of modern thought and science, and with the living cultural and spiritual traditions and longings of India, and if the pressing economic, social and political problems are resolved with vision, sympathy, imagination and humanitarian outlook. Of such problems the most vital is the rejuvenation of the Indian village true to its ancient civic ideals and the renascent impulse now speeding our hopes. The new Indian village will not be a mere replica, a thoughtless repetition of the old. It will have the beauty of form of a rebirth, the new features of an emergence. It will not reject any of the blessings of Science. It will throb with the aid of the new powers that man has found in his mastery of nature-forces. Electric or radio or some still unborn and unnamed power will do the drudgery of economic and fleshy existence, the slave-duties of home life from cooking to cleaning, from flying to sporting. The great rebirth of the Indian village clothed in all the singular majesty of a new coming, is the promised land for every Indian. It will also be the message of peace and love to the whole world, a beautiful, quiet, self-centred existence where from the cradle to the grave there is a perfumed continuity of expression both in individual and collective life. It will be a song in short,

more spontaneous than the music from the throat of the singing bird.

The ideal of collective welfare is fully achieved only by the perfection of the individual. That life alone is beautiful which shares in just proportion the joys of action and meditation in a cycle of perfect equipoise. Life which neither seeks nor rejects has the fullest value both temporary and permanent. Life which needs nothing, which shuns nothing, which goes in quest of nothing is the rarest and the choicest, and the fullest in Nature.

Utmost freedom is the cry of all growing life. It is the secret of creative evolution. The spirit continually strives to escape the bondage of matter, the slave-labour to the gross. In the plane of his own evolution, each shall have the freedom to rise to the highest reaches of his self-expression, and the inequalities if any shall be only internal and never imposed from without.

The essence of all Renaissance is that proper use of its liberated impulse and energy should be made at the psychological moment of its maturity. The fields should be ready, ridges repaired, soil turned, seeds sown, ere the cloud-burst descends. Then only the harvest will be ample and the joy of plenty shared by all. We have faith in the leaders Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsee, and European, that the inner voice, the true and lofty urge of Renascent India will reach them, touch

their heart and conscience to united action at the appropriate moment of Destiny.

Yet another great event hangs on the proper reordering of Indian life. On the quick solution of the Indian problem rests the walking pace of the whole world to the distant and cherished goal. The journey to the Promised Land is a long way and the speed of the straggling caravan of humanity is the speed of its slowest member. In the collective march of a species, no nation, nay not even an individual can be left out without its own minute but effective reaction on the whole, without impeding the general progress. May this vision of the true law of life be vouchsafed to the black, brown, yellow, and white bureaucrats of the world who choke the stream of human life like so many erratic and meaningless boulders in mid-course at the most fateful turnings of the river!

One Prayer goes from all to the unseen Powers that now drive the world's chariot along steep hill-climbs, apparently with the nonchalance of a hackney driver for hire. May they whisper a word of comfort and assurance to the devout but bewildered pilgrims to the next Shrine on the hill-top, beyond yonder green and wooded valley. May the great gods scatter a ray of light that shows us the way to the Next Rung in the New Ladder of Human Life!

CHAPTER VIII

SWARAJ CONSTITUTION FOR INDIA

THE political machinery we devise for Swaraj India will be the real measure of our own achievement in turning the renascent energy into national reconstruction on all sides, even as the bucket we send down the well fixes the flow of water into the fields. The teeming millions of India long for political liberty, economic equality and the freedom to evolve in all directions, each according to the bent and bias of his own mind. A minimum of government shall be the central idea of the frame work. The constitution shall be light and flexible. It shall not sit heavy on the heart of the nation. It shall stimulate full-blooded development on all sides.

As many of the relevant provisions of the earlier chapter, "In My Republic" as are suitable, may be embodied in the Swaraj Constitution. Both the chapters may be read together. These provisions are only the first steps towards the higher goal. The ideals are kept in view and the suitable atmosphere for their full realisation is prepared.

1. VILLAGE COUNCILS

Every village or homogeneous group of villages shall have a village council in which shall vest the administration of the village. Every one hundred of the population of a village as per census every decade shall be represented by one member in the village council. But in no case shall the village council be less than five in number.

The life of the council shall be for one year. The election shall be by ballot on the basis of universal adult franchise. The village council may elect its own chairman for conducting its business.

The village council shall be assisted by an executive officer preferably of local knowledge and experience, who shall be provided with an accountant and a staff composed of a *talayari* or a watchman who does general police duties, and a *niranikan* or irrigation overseer. The executive shall carry out the resolutions of the village council.

The village council shall be in charge of irrigation sources and channels, tanks, temples, fisheries, schools both vocational and academic, libraries, sanitation and all other rural needs and amenities. It shall strive to introduce electric power for lighting, home and agricultural work.

It shall levy the tax in its own right through its own agencies on rates of assessment which

shall not exceed the maximum rates fixed by the Provincial Council. Small holdings of an acre shall be tax-free. Fifty per cent of its revenue collection, it shall hold for its own rural needs and purposes of village improvement and administration. It shall remit twenty per cent to the Provincial and thirty per cent to the National Council.

The village council shall be controlled in all judicial matters, civil and criminal, by a village court presided over by a judge. The village council shall act as the jury in all civil and criminal matters before the court which shall have jurisdiction in suits of the value of not more than two-thousand rupees, and in offences involving not more than six months imprisonment, in which cases they shall go to the District Court which shall have unlimited jurisdiction. There shall be only one appeal in all cases, however big or important, from the village court to the District Court if the value is above five hundred rupees, from the District Court to the High Court if above ten thousand rupees.

The judge of the village court shall be recruited from a highly educated and legally qualified class. The general advice and guidance of the judge shall also be sought for by the village council even in non-judicial matters. And he shall be an ex-officio member of the village council.

My hopes of village reconstruction are fondly centered on the village school-teacher. He shall

be recruited from graduates who have travelled widely and had some special training. The teacher of the village school must be a real teacher with a flair and zeal for public work. He must have the capacity to dominate the village intellectually and spiritually. In communion with the village judge, he must give the true lead to the village council and village life, and create the proper atmosphere for progress.

No officer in the village including the judge and the teacher shall be paid more than thirty rupees a month.

Every officer who acquires property anywhere and in any form during or after his tenure of office, shall do so only on the scrutiny and sanction of the village council of which he is a member for the time being or in whose jurisdiction he lives.

The qualification for membership in the village council shall be a fair degree of education, and non-ownership of property. Membership of the council shall carry with it a subsistence allowance not exceeding thirty rupees a month. The chief executive officer shall be as far as possible honorary, and preferably the nobleman of the village, who shall take all his directions from the village council.

2. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The next step from the village shall be the District. There shall be no intermediate centralisation of

administrative authority at fircā or taluq headquarters. The administration of the District shall vest in one chief executive officer, like the present collector. He shall have control over other heads of the various departments, except the judicial, such as police, irrigation, forest and education.

There shall be a District Court with unlimited jurisdiction in all matters. It shall consist of a judge assisted by a jury of whom two or three shall be from the village from which the suit arises.

The District officers shall belong to the Provincial Service recruited thereto by a Public Service Commission on an all-India basis by a competitive examination which shall be open to all the races of the world.

No District officer shall be paid a salary of more than three hundred rupees a month. And the same rule as to the acquisition of property shall also apply to them.

3. PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

The Provinces shall be on the linguistic and cultural basis. When there is conflict as to the area of affiliation it shall be determined as desired by the majority of the people in the area of conflict.

For every lakh of the population, there shall be one member in the Provincial Councils. Where

the population of any Province is less than twelve millions, the council shall not be less than 120 members.

The election to the councils shall be on universal adult franchise.

THE EXECUTIVE

The Province shall be administered by an executive of not more than ten ministers with the Governor at the head. The council shall elect the chief minister who shall not be chosen from among themselves. The chief minister shall appoint the other ministers who shall not also be chosen from among the members of the council. After appointment, the ministers shall become ex-officio members with right to sit, vote and debate. They shall be responsible to the council which may remove them at pleasure.

The Governor shall be nominated by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of India after consultation with his cabinet.

The Governor shall be paid not more than Rs. 1,000 a month and the ministers not more than Rs. 750 a month, if you cannot get first class men to do this public duty honorary.

The organisation, direction and control of the District heads shall vest in the Provincial Executive of ministers.

The life of the provincial council shall be for three years.

There shall be a High Court which shall consist of not more than ten judges. The salary of a judge shall not be more than Rs. 1,000 a month. The High Court shall hear appeals from the District Courts of the value of not less than ten thousand rupees.

4. THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA ASSEMBLY

For every half-a-million of population, there shall be one member in the Commonwealth Assembly of India. 640 members will be the strength of our first Assembly.

The village council shall be the electoral body. The election need not be on the colossal scale which universal adult suffrage means. The election to the Assembly shall be on the principle of proportional representation by the single transferable vote. There shall be no communal electorates either in the Commonwealth or Provincial Government. The life of the Assembly shall be for five years.

The Governor-General shall be appointed by His Majesty the King of England for a period of seven years.

The Prime Minister shall be elected by the members of the Assembly, who shall not be chosen from among themselves. The Prime Minister shall nominate his colleagues who shall not also be

members of the Assembly at the time of the appointment. The ministers shall not be more than twelve in number. But after nomination they shall sit, debate and vote and may be removed at the pleasure of the Assembly.

The Governor-General shall be paid not more than Rs. 1,200 a month and the ministers not more than Rs. 1,000 a month.

There shall be a Supreme Court which shall decide all inter-district, inter-provincial and inter-state disputes that may be referred to it. It shall also hear appeals from the High Courts on pure questions of law of general and constitutional interest or public importance.

There shall be no second chamber or Senate either in the Provinces or in the Commonwealth Government. There is no need in India, where colossal conservative forces in politics and religion reign supreme, for a revising second chamber to check hasty legislation. India can never move too quickly. Its immense population and splendid variety are by themselves the greatest checks on hasty legislation. A second chamber in India will ruin tragically the great impulses of the Renaissance. A revising chamber will become in India only a rendezvous of all reactionary elements. Our greatest need is to move quickly, and build our national life before the renascent urge is over. A second chamber even with limited powers will retard Indian progress by three centuries.

On the other hand, instead of a revising chamber, there is considerable utility in devising a preparatory house, both for the Provinces and for the Central Government. Our problems are so many, our political life is yet so young, our interests are so varied and conflicting, that a preliminary house for real debate and discussion, of sincere enquiry into high, national policies will prove a great source of constructive strength to the Commonwealth and Provincial Governments. It will clarify the issues, and serve as a guiding light to the real legislators. If it functions well, its moral force would be tremendous. It would be the finest nursery for statesmen, and real humanitarian workers.

For political institutions to function healthily and serve as the true hand-maid to evolution, the motives of political life, as I have said so often, should suffer a grand sea-change. A new order of men should enter public life. From selfishness which is now the rule and the qualification, we should pass on quickly to selflessness as the supreme quality of political action and the true virtue of public life.

To create this atmosphere and help bringing in the new order of men, the first step is to throw open the membership of all deliberative bodies from the village council to the Assembly only to those men who combine a high degree of culture, gentility and character with non-ownership of

property, a new sanyasin order of men wholly devoted to public life like the Servants of India Society at Poona.

Another salutary rule, which would ensure the purity of public life, is that no servant of the Government of India from the lowest village watchman to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth shall acquire property in any form anywhere during or after his term of office without the consent or sanction of the village council or of the Public Service Commission which had recruited him.

These rules may seem much opposed to the ordinary run of practice, and the sense of possession so native to human life. But human life itself is only a rest-house in the long way of evolution, and the sense of possession itself is undergoing a slow but sure sublimation, a change into a higher quality. And if you are a true pilgrim you will think of the march for the morrow rather than of the joys of the rest-house.

Institutions mean outer control. Qualities mean inner control. We must refine and perfect both at the same time by judicious, selfless, impersonal action in all spheres, till the institutions disappear by the very perfection of the quality they are meant to inculcate. Such impersonal action is always performed according to Dharma or permanent standards of value which take their focus and directing power from the next higher rung in

evolution. All quest is, therefore, to find out these relatively eternal laws and principles to guide our social action in all spheres, from secular happiness to Infinite Bliss.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX
TABLE OF AREA, POPULATION AND REVENUE OF THE CHIEF
COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD

No.	NAME OF THE COUNTRY	AREA IN Sq. Miles	POPULATION AS PER LAST CENSUS	REVENUE LEVIED BY GOVERNMENT
1	India	1,805,332	318,942,480	2,244,713,000 rupees
2	England (Including Wales & Scotland)	89,047	42,917,382	£ 812,061,558
3	Ireland	32,586	4,494,000	£ 30,669,428
4	The Union Govt. of S. Africa	473,089	6,928,580	£ 27,105,730
5	Canada	3,603,336	8,788,483	\$ 527,198,729
6	The Commonwealth of Aus- tralia	2,974,581	5,435,734	£ 72,285,363
7	Federated Malay States	27,506	1,324,890	£ 10,099,166
8	Ceylon	25,332	4,497,854	£ 7,702,645

9	British Guiana	..	89,480	307,304	£ 1,095,574
10	Kenya	..	245,060	2,376,000	£ 2,580,955
11	Anglo-Egyptian Soudan	..	900,000	3,400,000	£ 5,210,000
12	W. Indies	..	11,711	1,655,242	£ 6,142,187
13	New Zealand	..	103,568	1,372,999	£ 24,725,762
14	Egypt	..	350,000	12,750,918	£ 41,131,000
15	France	..	212,659	39,209,518	39,960,481,489 francs
16	Germany	..	182,213	59,852,682	9,294,000,000 marks
17	Italy	..	117,982	38,835,941	21,200,000,000 liras
18	Bulgaria	..	39,824	4,958,400	6,992,101,000 leva
19	Czecho-Slovakia	..	54,191	13,611,349	9,537,814,000 crowns
20	Denmark	..	16,604	3,267,831	341,600,000 kroner
21	Norway	..	124,964	2,649,775	363,856,000 "
22	Austria	..	32,396	6,526,661	1,567,173,000 schillings
23	Belgium	..	11,752	7,465,782	9,578,381,871 francs

THE NEXT RUNG

No.	NAME OF THE COUNTRY	AREA IN SQ. MILES	POPULATION AS PER LAST CENSUS	REVENUE LEVIED BY GOVERNMENT
24	Portugal	35,490	6,032,991	674,076,183 escudos
25	Rumania	122,282	17,393,149	33,390,000,000 lei
26	Russia	8,417,118	182,182,600	4,856,000,000 roubles
27	Spain	190,050	21,347,335	3,073,378,000 pesetas
28	Sweden	173,105	5,987,520	748,830,800 kronors
29	Switzerland	15,975	3,880,320	£ 12,387,000
30	U. S. A.	3,743,529	117,823,165	\$ 3,772,753,000
31	Honduras	8,598	45,317	£ 204,927
32	Newfoundland & Labrador	42,734	259,259	\$ 9,753,521
33	Brazil	3,275,510	30,635,605	1,288,520,000 milreis
34	Chile	289,828	3,754,723	\$ 23,134,368
35	Argentine Republic	1,153,119	8,698,516	\$ 568,641,067

36	Japan	...	260,738	76,988,379	1,598,292,000 yens
37	China	...	4,277,170	436,094,953	\$ 586,338,174
38	Arabia	...	1,000,000	500,000	£ 110,000
39	Afghanistan	...	245,000	1,000,000	£ 5,000,000
40	Persia	...	628,000	8,500,000	£ 5,655,000
41	Palestine	...	9,000	757,182	£ 2,565,700
42	Turkey (Republic of)	...	494,538	10,000,000	£ T. 189,000,000

I would gladly have given you the aggregate cost of the world's government. But these trooping figures stagger my arithmetical powers. Let some interested reader reduce these figures to a common currency and arrive at the total figure of this Himalayan sacrifice of millions of toiling poor at the Kalighat of the world's governments, and work out the waste of man-power at the rate of 6d. per soul per day.

Printed by A. K. Sitarama Shastri, at the Vasanta Press, Adyar, Madras.

Books by K. S. Venkataramani

MURUGAN, THE TILLER. (A Novel of Indian Life, pp. 309.)

Second Edition, Re 1-8

1. Mr Venkataramani's work is successful by reason of his clear reasoning and obvious sincerity. His beautifully chosen phrases, often poetic but never over-sentimental, frequently show how well the English language is suited to English metaphor. The delineation of character is masterly. From a few succinct sentences we become well-acquainted with all the central figures of the story. "Murugan" is distinctly a book to read and to think about, whether on holiday or in the study.—*The Review of Reviews*.

2. In its pages speaks the voice of the countless tillers of the soil . . . He brings out with all the simplicity and charm of his earlier work the best sides of Hindu family life.—*Times Literary Supplement*.

3. A novel by the well-known Indian social worker and author of "Sand-Dunes" and "Paper Boats". The thought is gentle and profound . . . "Murugan" is more useful than many more pretentious tomes, and very readable.—*The Foreign Affairs*.

4. I missed the fast train and the best tribute to the book is that I did not find the journey long, though we stopped at every station. Mr. Venkataramani's genius for observation is illustrated in this book.—A. FENNER BROCKWAY in *The New Leader*.

5. The success he has achieved in English authorship is indeed remarkable. Mr. Venkataramani's descriptions of rural life, the river scenes and the life of college students are all vivid.—*The Cape Times*.

6. Ramu, a very lovable character. He represents the highest form of natural religion. His extraordinary power due to sheer benevolence is well brought out.—*The Egyptian Gazette*.

7. The Indian author of "On the Sand-Dune" and "Paper Boats," Mr. K. S. Venkataramani, has now published a new novel, "Murugan—The Tiller". The same intimacy and the graphic talent for description make "Murugan" valuable to the student of India. It is a well-told story.—R. M. BLOCH in *The Birmingham Weekly Post*.

Books by K. S. Venkataramani

8. Zola in "Fecondite" did not preach with greater earnestness the doctrine of the love of Earth, the "Mother of All". But the difference between the French and the Indian mind is at once apparent. To Zola's Forment, the Earth brings wealth; to Mr. Venkataramani's Ramachandran she offers only contentment.—J. C. MOLONY, I.C.S., in *The Asiatic Review*.

9. The conception of the story and the agrarian project which reconciles all to the simple life are rather fine and noble. Those who read "Murugan" through will find something curiously attractive about the tale.—*The Irish Statesman*.

10. The author is well known for his charming volumes on Indian village life, "Paper Boats" and "On the Sand-Dune" and his new work should be even more popular. He takes broad views, and has a singularly agreeable literary style. All classes of readers in this country will find that the book throws a wonderful light on various problems in India.—*The Sussex Daily News*.

11. It is a very well-written and interesting story. Mr. Venkataramani has a manner of writing which surely indicates his true sense of what fiction should be. I shall look forward to reading his next novel with the greatest interest.—*The London Literary Correspondent of the Hindu*.

12. As a writer of short sketches and essays, Mr. K. S. Venkataramani has achieved no small reputation. Prominent British writers have commended his work, so respected an authority as Mr. Frederic Harrison remarking that "the English style is graceful and correct," while Mr. William Archer found in the author's sketches "much grace and sincerity of feeling". In "Murugan—The Tiller," the author has given us a novel of Indian life in South India to-day which possesses distinction, grace and that rarer quality, fidelity to every-day life.—*The Madras Mail*.

13. Mr. K. S. Venkataramani, the author of "Paper Boats" and "On the Sand-Dune," those sensitive transcriptions of Indian life and thought, here gives us his first novel and an interesting production it is. It is a novel with a purpose . . . beautiful picture of idealistic peace painted with evident sincerity.—*The Times of India*.

14. A fascinating and faithful portraiture of social life to-day. . . . The old and the new, mingle and separate, act and react, repel and attract so as to tend towards a new order and harmony in things . . . the magic of his art steals upon us. . . . The

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sense of humour, as enlivening as it is natural, plays gracefully over the whole book and makes his literary art a source of both enjoyment and enlightenment to his readers.—PROF. K. SUNDARAMAN in *The Hindu*.

15. This is a charming story told in English of South Indian Village life. The author has imagination and his patriotic feelings are praiseworthy. The language is simple and charming and the book will amply repay reading.—*The Statesman*.

16. Great trouble has been taken to produce an attractive story portraying the mind of the student and the cultivator.—*The Pioneer*.

17. There is a subtle fascination about his river-side scenes. He has quite an original, interpretative way of expression and there are passages in his story which are full of beauty.—*The Indian National Herald*.

18. Idealism is writ large on every page. Language of rare delicacy and sweetness . . . deliciously outlined by an artist who knows how to write tender and wholesome English.—*The Rangoon Times*.

19. The story, on the whole, is very powerful . . . it is brilliant. He possesses an eye for telling incidents, the capacity for manipulating a complex plot, an ability to individualise characters, and a mastery over language which serves him equally well in dialogue (the scenes on the Alavanti river are unforgettable), description and reflection.—*The Modern Review*.

20. The story is profound with thoughts subtle and concealed. Love in its purely oriental fashion, with the magic touch of delicacy, is revealed in many a place.—*The Indian Review*.

21. There is scarcely a dull page in the whole work. Mr. Venkataramani's work is an effective antidote to the propaganda against the Hindu social system and Hindu civilization, by some Western writers. An extensive circulation of Mr. Venkataramani's book in England and America is bound to produce beneficial results.—*Federated India*.

22. For delicate humour and graphic description of women, the river scenes stand unexcelled in the story. All the charms of village gossip, unaffected and innocent, are irresistably felt.—*The Forward*.

Books by K. S. Venkataramani

PAPER BOATS. (Sketches of Indian Village Life, pp. 123.) Second Edition, Re. 1

1. An Indian who writes with rare charm and sympathy about his own people.—J. A. SPENDER in *The Changing East*.

2. . . . They are drawn with a loving intimacy that distinguishes them from the analytical detachment of European writers. . . . He has presented them in a peculiar atmosphere of his own. . . . A corner of the veil which is always down is lifted and we catch a glimpse of the real household life. "Paper Boats" is a book wherewith to beguile an hour over the fire.—*The Times Literary Supplement*.

3. A vivid, very attractive picture of life in an Indian Village . . . The book has atmosphere. Some of the studies of rural life are very charming. Mr. Venkataramani writes a sensitive, idiomatic English and the sympathy and intimate understanding with which he interprets his people should make the reading of his book a liberal education for Englishmen.—*The Bookman*.

4. In Mr. Venkataramani's work the English reader will find India presented in terms that he can understand. He is told about Hindu Village life in the prose of Addison.—*The Daily Herald*.

5. In "Paper Boats," Mr. K. S. Venkataramani reveals himself as an essayist who should go far. He knows his India well. I was greatly charmed by "The Hindu Temple" and "The Hindu Pilgrim".—*The Birmingham Weekly Post*.

6. It is marked by rare charm and delicate insight and is written in quaintly felicitous English. . . . Floating on their native waters they have absorbed the delicate odours of jasmine and lotus.—*The New Pearson's, New York*.

7. It will give the English reader a better insight into the Hindu mind and a better appreciation of the Indian social point of view than half a dozen of the many weighty treatises by the Pundits. Mr. Venkataramani's sketches are very real and very human.—*The Review of Reviews*.

8. The first seven lines of this book tell the reader that he is in the presence of "Literature". The rest of the book confirms it. He touches humanity with the compassion of blood relationship. Mr. Venkataramani at once without question takes his place as a writer of unimpeachable English, and a translator of the essence of Modern Indian Life, at its source, the village.—*To-Morrow*.

Books by K. S. Venkataramani

9. Mr. Venkataramani in less than a dozen delicate pastels gives us a picture of the peaceful life of the Indian Village. . . . They are really charming essays. . . . Mr. Venkataramani has humour too—in the vein of Lamb and with something of Lamb's power of mischievous quotation mangling. And the gentleness of unenforced idealism is in every essay.—*The Times of India*.

10. . . . This human touch is the most precious contribution. This is the first such fleet sent out from India to the English speaking world. A few more such would accomplish the conquest of the hearts of Western men and women more thoroughly than hundreds of learned articles.—*The Calcutta Review*.

11. The beautiful descriptive sketches of South Indian Life deserve all praise. Each is a fascinating vignette glowing with joyful emotion, restrained at the same time by a gentle touch of satire and breaking forth into occasional ripples of laughter—mere ripples and not outbursts as is the way of all refined comedy, described by Meredith in his famous essay on the subject.—*The Modern Review*.

12. The author has a style which can justly and properly be called distinctive. He says what he has to say in a way that he has made peculiarly his own and it is often a way that is so felicitous as to be final. . . . The touch of the writer is as delicate as it is sure and there is never absent the note of that best type of humour which is always based on sympathy. . . . Mr. Venkataramani has definitely made his mark as a stylist. The writing is correct, picturesque and effective.—*The Indian Review*.

13. The author's pen-pictures of a Hindu Home are brilliantly set in a charming style, at once striking and vivid. His keen observation, study and experience of the details of the household, and his accurate portrayal of them in language full of charm and humor make the voyage in his "Paper Boats" pleasant and easy.—*The Theosophist*.

14. The writer has a wonderful capacity for identifying himself with his subject and bringing out to the utmost detail the joy and sorrow of every day existence.—*The Rangoon Mail*.

15. A modest and unassuming title which covers a cargo of neat and well-executed vignettes. The author's style is clear and possesses the rare quality of rhythm which makes a good style, a pleasure in itself. When added to this is a humour, a broad sympathy, an optimism that steadfastly refuses to look upon the dark side of things, you can have a collection upon which the only possible criticism is that there is not more of it.—*The Hindu*.

Svetaranya Ashrama, Mylapore, Madras

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16. He comprehends life well, hence his wide sympathy with all human beings. He has painted his study of them in true, artistic colours. . . . His tiny book will doubtless shine out a brilliant and permanent light amid the relatively dark void of Anglo-Indian Literature.—*The Swarajya*.

17. Here is a delightful collection of "Essays," in the original sense of the word, for there is something distinctively new about them. . . . There is a dream-like felicity in some of the casual portraits that lingers in the mind of the reader long after he has closed the book. There is an aerial delicacy as of clouds reflected in still water on a moonlight night in pictures like these.—*The Daily Express*.

18. A vivid picturesqueness and a sense of humor as well as of pathos which lend a peculiar freshness to these studies of Indian Life. We must also congratulate Mr. Venkataramani on the remarkable purity of his English.—*The Madras Mail*.

19. Written in a very attractive style, with an intimate knowledge; subtle and naive humour that breathes almost a classical restraint.—*Forward*.

20. The writer is a complete master of English, simple, dainty, with a sense of humour, steeped in the sweetness of affection, running through the living descriptions.—*DR. ANNIE BESANT* in the Foreword.

Books by K. S. Venkataramani

ON THE SAND-DUNES. (Musings on Life in Free Verse, pp. 58.) Re. 1

1. Steadily advancing to the front rank of his generation is Mr. Venkataramani. We first knew this author from "Paper Boats," a fine performance which earned him just praise for his command of that almost lost art the Essay. Now comes "On the Sand-Dune". Mr. Venkataramani muses addressing to his listener, a series of philosophical reflections, each one of which is distinguished by peculiarly musical, poetical prose.—*The Daily Herald*.

2. Mr. Venkataramani's "Paper Boats" (reviewed in these columns on March 9, last), attracted considerable attention on its appearance for the distinctive native atmosphere with which he had managed to envelop his slight sketches of Hindu Life. The same atmosphere is felt in this new book.—*The Times Literary Supplement*.

3. Mr. K. S. Venkataramani wrote a charming book of intimate Indian essays entitled "Paper Boats" not so very long ago. Now, "On the Sand-Dune" arrives from Madras by the same clever craftsman . . . His snatches of reflection, and aphorism and small word pictures in poetic prose pleased me greatly.—*The Birmingham Weekly Post*.

4. "Modern life, its miseries and uncertainties."—*The New York Times*.

5. K. S. Venkataramani has made a name for himself with a previous book called "Paper Boats". This author is a follower of Gandhi and a very accomplished writer of English. "On the Sand-Dune" is a series of reflections on life, which in their hatred of industrialism as well as in the beauty of the style, recall Ruskin.—*The Glasgow Bulletin*.

6. "Sand-Dune" is reminiscent in theme of Edward Carpenter's "Towards Democracy". . . . Mr. Venkataramani is a man of refinement of sentiment, of lofty ideals, and immensely sincere. He is an artist within his *genre*, the interpretation of his own people.—*The New Pearson's, New York*.

7. To appreciate it properly one has to read it leisurely from cover to cover and to drink slowly the exquisite melody of the words as they form themselves into passionate appeals for what Carlyle calls the eternal verities of life.—THE HON. MR. JUSTICE C. V. KUMARASWAMI SASTRY in *The Indian Review*.

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8. Suffused with a mystic glow these charming song-reveries plaintively appeal for a return to simplicity, to peaceful contemplation and joy of homely, simple life.—*The Hindustan Review*.

9. It is scarcely possible to bring out fully the delicate fragrance of this charming brochure. With its fine chiselled English, its pathos, its inimitable touches of life and its gentle irony . . . real literature . . . to read it is to love it.—*The New Empire*.

10. "On the Sand-Dune" is a very touching prose poem, there is such a deal of pathetic beauty in it.—*The Hindu*.

11. This little book is itself a first fruit of that Renaissance which Mr. Venkataramani feels is approaching.—*The Madras Mail*.

12. The burden of his song, which is in poetic prose, is that we should strive for a better harmony of cultures and civilisations in this land of ours. What aim can be nobler and what ideal more uplifting?—*The Janmabhumi*.

